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MAYNARD'S LAST FIGHT.

On the Battle Field in South Africa --- A Strange Meeting of Estranged Hearts---Turning to the Right.

By NOLAN CASTLEKNOCK.

It was almost dark as Maynard, V. C., lit a cigarette and strolled towards the opposite end of the camp. Overhead the sky looked blotchy and glowering in the half light, and two or three drops of rain splashed on his khaki uniform.

"Tough day tomorrow," he muttered, as he took the cigarette from his lips and glanced up at the heavy gray clouds racing across the angry sky in flaming billows. A heavy drop splashed on the lighted end of his cigarette and extinguished it.

"People would call that a bad omen," he thought, "and tomorrow perhaps—— Bah!" muttering contemptuously, "what a silly old fossil I'm growing. Getting superstitious in my old age. Maynard, V. C., of the First Punjab, turning croaker. Lord! how the fellows in Calcutta would laugh, if they knew Major Maynard, sceptic and general unbeliever in the efficacy of all things beyond the barrel of a revolver, had begun weighing probabilities like any old lady peering into the bottom of her tea-cup. But still—I wonder——"

Maynard shivered slightly, but not with cold. There was something wrong with him tonight, a strange hankering to be alone and free to make his peace with somebody or something. The somebody was too vague and chaotic for definition, but the feeling impelled him to get away from the others and endeavor to make this vague peace in preparation for the ominous tomorrow.

For tomorrow's prospective battle would perhaps finally settle the aspect of the war. At dawn the British column was under orders to drive the entire concentrated force of the Boers from an almost impregnable position, and Maynard had seen too much fighting in his day not to be keenly alive to the fact that tomorrow's work would be the provocative of many sore hearts in far-away England. But Maynard's thoughts were not in England as he strolled down the main avenues of the camp with the occasional big drops of rain falling like dripping shots on his service helmet. Nobody in the old country would care much whether his body piled up one more stone in the building of the empire or not—nobody. In his eight years' absence people had forgotten him; and even to his own relations the name of Major Maynard, V. C., sounded only as the name of a vague someone whom they had known a long time ago.

So, what did it matter whether a Mauser bullet marked the last page in one more bitter life-story or not? Nobody cared much—himself least of all. For ten years he had looked on the matter indifferently—ten years, during which he had grizzled and turned and fought on the hills and plains of India, rubbing his hands along the rusty scythe of death so often that he had almost forgotten it possessed such a thing as an edge.

But tonight the old feeling of reckless abandon had vanished, and was replaced by this totally foreign emotion of calm and vague longing for peace. Strange shadows flitted past, and vanished into the darkness—the shadows of "what might have been," chased by the shadows of "what was." Amongst all the shadow pictures flitting across Maynard's mental horizon one face stood out pre-eminent from all others. It was the face of a woman.

It was an old story, and gossip's versatile tongue had hung many versions of it in many frames, gilded and otherwise, but the only man who could have supplied the true one was the last person in the world whom the curious inquirer would have dared to ask.

It was the old story of a husband and wife both possessing unusually strong and obstinate natures. An idle disagreement, culminating in prolonged and mutually stubborn misunderstanding—after that a big row—another man—and you have the chain of events which led to Maynard's tragedy.

When Maynard returned one day, and found she had started for Bombay, at which place she had agreed to meet the other man, en route for England, he said or did nothing extraordinary. He merely sat himself down and tried to look the matter in the face steadily.

With persistent effort Maynard eventually succeeded; but, though superficially unruffled, the blow had gone home deeply, and for days he went about his duties with all the life and feeling well-nigh crushed out of him.

Then he made a big effort, and, being a man of strong will-power, slowly forced the feeling under, and ground down the last remaining fragments into ashes. The last-ter he put away into the sepulchre of the past and over the closed door wrote the two words, "Done with." Only once, during those eight long years, had the heavy door swung backwards on its rusty hinges, and that was on the receipt of a letter nearly a fortnight after his wife's departure. In the soiled sheet of note-paper was embodied a recital of the great mistake of a woman's lifetime, and the faltering lines were punctuated with bitter tears of repentance. Long ere the train had reached Bombay she had realized with horror the awful mistake she was making—she knew that she had never loved but one man, and that man was her husband. Too frightened and stunned at the finality of her act and its inevitable consequences, she had, on reaching her destination, proceeded directly to some friends in Bombay, at whose house she awaited fortnight had been spent.

The hard line of Maynard's mouth never relaxed a moment, only as he neared the closing sentences, his brows knitted slightly in the endeavor to arrive at the exact meaning. The words were blotched and blurred and all but undecipherable, but he persevered to detect a shadow of reiteration of her unfaltering love for him and a skilful plea for forgiveness. And Maynard's answer?

Well, steadily he walked across the room and dropped the letter into the fire with a bitter smile of sceptical contempt. Over the pitiful sheet of paper, as it shrivelled up amongst the burning coals, Maynard thought he had closed for all time the gates of the past, and, during the eight years that followed, sought to force forgetfulness to a life of perpetual action.

But tonight, as he walked along with death hovering in the air around him, the old concentration of will seemed to abeyance, and thoughts long repressed rose and surged through his brain without hindrance.

What had become of her, after all? he wondered. Was she dead, or——

Suddenly Maynard pulled himself up with a start on finding that he had reached the extreme end of the camp, where the hospital was situated.

There or four big hospital tents loomed up ghost-like in the darkness around him, and the low, protracted moans of the wounded and dying made him shiver involuntarily.

For some moments he stood listlessly watching the dim forms of the sentries as they tramped to and fro in the semi-gloom, then glanced up at the faint outlines of the Red Cross flags flapping noisily against the taunt tent-poles.

Tomorrow perhaps he——

The sudden proximity of voices undisturbed his morbid meditations and as he looked in the direction from which the sounds came, Maynard saw two women in nurses' garb emerge from the nearest tent and walk towards him.

As they approached, Maynard drew back to allow them to pass. In doing so, one of the ladies placed a screen on a shaki-clad figure, and as she turned away Maynard caught a faint glimpse of the outline of her face.

"Great God!" he muttered, hoarsely, and he staggered a little; "it couldn't be she! No, no! I am mad tonight—quite mad! Thinking over that cursed episode in my life has turned me into a monstrous visionary, seeing ghosts in places where ghosts never walk. And yet I could have sworn——" With a shrug of contempt Maynard drew his lips together grimly and retraced his footsteps through the long lines of tents where the tired-out soldiers lay sleeping.

"Poor fellows," he muttered, "I wonder how many of them will go to sleep tomorrow and never wake up!"

When Maynard reached his tent he drank a little of the whisky in his flask.

Then, having filled and lighted a quaint old Indian pipe, he sat down and commenced to clean and oil his revolvers. For some time he worked vigorously, his lips emitting thick mists of rocking tobacco smoke, but gradually the absorption in his immediate work dwindled, as the previous

"I have fought my last fight, Renie," he whispered, "we'll go home together."

thought-wave surged through his brain once more, its crest lipped with the broken timbers and wreckage of the past. The puffs of smoke lessened in volume and the intervals between grew long as Maynard dropped the revolvers and stared out through the opening of his tent with unseeing eyes.

For a long time he sat gazing vacantly into the darkness beyond, until he at length woke with a start to find that his pipe had burnt out long ago, and that the night had grown intensely cold. With a shiver he rose and knocked the ashes out of his pipe against the tent-pole.

"Huh!" he muttered. "What sentimental fools we men always are when there is a woman in the business!"

This was almost unusual condemnation, emanating in this case more or less from a sense of personal application. Maynard wrapped himself in a great coat and threw himself down with a sigh of utter weakness.

When he awoke the thin gray light announcing the advent of the coming day had already begun to steal into the tent, and outside suppressed sounds of bustle and activity announced the fact of the camp being already astir. His toilet was soon completed, and after a few final preparations Maynard hastened to the place appointed for the assembly of his regiment. With clock-work precision the component parts of the big human machine forming the attacking force assumed their allotted positions, and then moved out into the driving rain from the lines of white tents that loomed in the gray light like the white tombstones in some great cemetery.

As the column swung forward in silence some solemn force impelled Maynard to glance backward towards the spot where the Red Cross flag fluttered over the big hospital tents.

Life drew his shoulders up slightly as standing away again, and the strange feeling of stillness and awed content which he had experienced the night before stole over him once more. He had gone out to battle and had found Gideon hoping there was eight reckless years, and the only feeling pervading him was a savage love of excitement and devil-may-care desperation. But this new feeling was a totally alien emotion, and he never experienced anything similar during the whole of his subsequent career. He felt to be content now, and as he turned his back upon the graveyard of tents, and faced his eyes on the jagged hills in front, he knew he was going out to his last fight.

And Maynard's presentation had almost reached fulfilment when he was picked up, two hours later, by the ambulance corps. For eight hours the battle had raged fiercely and with such a monotony of obstinacy, that, at last the British infantry, by dogged perseverance, forced their way up the hills in the teeth of a withering fire and captured the Boer position at the point of the bayonet.

Maynard's regiment had led the van of the attacking party, and consequently its ranks had borne the brunt of the leaden devastation. Almost the entire component of men had been cut down and Maynard's body was terribly smashed and broken when the first ambulance picked him up, two hours after the great battle. His injuries were so numerous that little hope was entertained of saving his life; but nevertheless every care and attention compatible with the circumstances and conditions were bestowed on the crushed form of Maynard, V. C. When the field hospital at last at length reached by the long line of ambulance vans, what little vitality remained in the bruised body was handed over to two earnest-faced nurses, and the surgeon ahead, his head-wig sufficiently as Maynard was lifted from the ambulance wagon.

"Not much use, nurse," he said, turning towards one of the nurses, a woman with a peculiarly gentle face and soft gray eyes. "Not much use to do anything for that case. He is a major in one of the Indian regiments, I think, and a devilish hill-fighter; but I'm afraid, poor chap, he has fought his last fight. I will look over him presently, however, and in the meantime," smiling, "I leave him in competent hands. Oh, by the by, nurse, let me see," he continued, as he turned away, "his name is Major—Major Maynard."

Had the doctor's departure been a little less grateful, he certainly would have accepted noticing the sudden whiteness that overspread the face of the woman in the nurse's uniform at the mention of Maynard's name. For a moment she swayed slightly, and her hands convulsively clasped and unclasped themselves; then with a strong effort of self-control she restored her sudden emotion backward, and hurried towards the wounded man's bed on which Maynard's inert form had been placed.

He was lying on his back, still and motionless, as if he were already dead, and as she looked down on the strong face, all polished and sculptured with death, the awful feeling of faintness overcame her again, and she felt as almost every available desire to cast herself down beside him and cry aloud in God to save him.

But gradually professional instinct temporarily quelled the dread feeling of despair that threatened to set her sobbing, and her self-control returned. She summoned all her energies to the task of saving the shattered form lying so dreadfully still.

But although the nurse's coolness and methodical ingenuity her whole being was permeated by one thought—one desire—one mental prayer to God to save him.

For many days, however, the efficacy of her prayer remained in question.

The doctors came and went, but paid out little heed to the white-faced nurse, who spent her nights and days bravely fighting away from Maynard's bedside the remorselessly-at Maynard's throat. When they remonstrated with her over-sacrifice of energy she refused her relief on the ground that Maynard had been a friend of hers many years ago.

"A friend?" exclaimed Doctor Plotts. "Oh, I see," he continued, smiling slightly; "that explains his use of your Christian name when I called round the night before last. You were taking your compulsory walk at the time."

"My Christian name?" repeated Nurse Irene.

"The delirium was very bad at the time," replied Doctor Plotts, explanatory, "and he kept on repeating 'Irene! Irene!'"

"Oh, I see," she said, with a faint smile of relief; "he was calling on his wife. Her name is Irene—the same as mine; but he—lost her eight years ago."

"Dead? Poor chap," continued the doctor, sympathetically; "he was evidently very fond of her. I think he'll pull through," he continued, as he moved away; "yes, I think he'll pull through now, Nurse Irene. Thanks to your indefatigable nursing."

And Doctor Plotts' prognostications were in this instance fully justified, for three days later Maynard's delirium ceased, and he grew vaguely conscious of feeling like a human spoon from which all the life and strength had been wrung.

As his sunken eyes roamed around with pathetic interrogation, someone in a surgeon's uniform came and stood by his bedside.

"Ah, that's a bit better," said Doctor Plotts, cheerily; "you will soon come round now, Major. In a few weeks you'll be as fit as a fiddle."

"Where am I? What is this place?" muttered Maynard.

"In hospital. Had a beastly bad shaking up, you remember, at Klimsdorp," replied the doctor; "but Nurse Irene here saved your life with her nursing. I will call round again to see you this afternoon. Good-by."

"Klimsdorp?" repeated Maynard, vaguely. "Nurse Irene? Irene? Irene? I remember—the big fight—shot badly; but—but—who is Nurse Irene?"

She came and stood by the bedside as he repeated her name. Maynard slowly turned his eyes till they rested on the nurse's uniform beside him, then his glance travelled upwards till it rested on the owner's face.

"What!" he exclaimed, with a shiver.

STUCK.

"And you are stuck on your last husband?" he faltered, wishing to seem very sympathetic.

"I never was so badly stuck on a husband in all my life!" she said. "I supposed he was worth a million, and he isn't worth anything!"

"Yes," she said; "I am Sister Irene."

"The doctor said you had saved my life. I am grateful," said Maynard, coldly, "but I would rather have died."

"I know," she said, as her lips quivered pathetically, "but don't think you owe me anything. The doctor exaggerated; I only did as much for you as any other nurse would have done. You are better now, and I shall not worry you with my presence any more. I am going back to England on Thursday. Before I leave you," she continued, slowly, "I should like to say something. May I?"

"You have saved my life," replied Maynard; "say anything you please."

"I know you will never forgive what occurred eight years ago but in the years to come will you try to think of me a little less harshly. Try to think that one man has not one woman in the world her life's happiness. Try to think that the one gleam of brightness in the future will be the knowledge that I am still your—your wife. Will you try to do this? Try to think a little kindly of me, will you?" she added, brokenly.

For one moment a glimmer of old dogged pride and obstinacy showed in Maynard's sunken eyes. He had trampled all this under foot years ago. Were those heart-burning years, with their ever-gnawing canker of disappointment and blighted belief in the old sweet ideal of woman's goodness and purity, all to be for nought now, just because this woman, who had shattered all his ideals, said, "Think of me gently"?

But even as the bitter word rose to Maynard's bloodless lips, some strange feeling swept through him like a breath of early morning—some subtle fragrance of returning life and hope and happiness. For the pride had been conquered almost at the moment of its victory by the love which even eight years' fierce repression could not eradicate, and the old sweet belief and noble trust came back again as Maynard looked into the sad gray eyes of his wife.

"You are quite sure I will pull through?" he asked, abruptly.

"Yes," she replied, in surprise. "In a few weeks the doctor says you will be—"

"And you start for England on Thursday?" he went on. "Will you wait a few weeks till I am able to get about again?"

"If you wish it," she said.

"I am very tired now," continued Maynard, "and so horribly weak—see! I can't raise my hand. Will you stoop down and put your hand in mine for a moment?"

"Oh, Jack!" she cried, "you mean—"

"I have fought my last fight, Renie," he whispered. "We'll go home together."

Ghost of the Glacier.

And Other Tales, including Making a Revolution, Susquehanna Trail, Sculpture of the Elfs. Once a Pillar for the World, Feathers of Fashion, and others. A delightful volume, beautifully illustrated. Ready for distribution about May 1. Send 10 cents to T. W. Lee, General Passenger Agent, Lackawanna Railroad, 26 Exchange Place, New York City. Edition Limited.

He Couldn't Try It There.

Clerk—I see that an eminent Chicago man says he can live on 10 cents a day to go to work at 8:45 a. m., start for home at 12 m., have dinner at 1 p. m., take a nap until 3:15, and then read, talk or sleep down and put your hand in mine for a moment!"

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Employer—Is that so? Well, if you have any notion of starting out to live 300 years on that schedule I'd advise you to look over the "wanted male help ads" right away.

CALIFORNIA LADIES

Experience With Drink.

"While using Postum and Java coffee, I was finally thrown into a serious case of nervous prostration, with heart trouble and dizzy headaches. My physician said my most serious stomach trouble for years. We finally gave up coffee and began the use of Postum. Both husband and myself have now been perfectly well for two years.

"Mrs. C. R. Holmes of 1966 Adair St., and Mrs. Ada Leonard, 25 Twenty-seventh St., Los Angeles, both tried Postum Food Coffee but did not boil it fifteen minutes, according to directions, and therefore did not like it. I made a cup for each of them the right way and they have used it daily and like it very much.

"Mrs. Ida Sherman of 6113 Wentworth Ave., Chicago, has been quite ill for years with dyspepsia and nervousness and I urged her to leave off coffee and take Postum Food Coffee. She now writes me that she is entirely well.

"Mrs. Julia Moore of Riverside, Cal., and Mrs. Lilly Allen of Ventura, Cal., have both ill for some years with heart trouble. I told them of my experience with coffee and induced them to leave off coffee and take Postum Food Coffee. Mrs. Moore was cured and in three weeks Mrs. Allen was well. Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Staldn wrote that she had been relieved more than having off coffee and using Postum than she had obtained from any medicine.

"Have naturally a strong advocate of Postum." Ina Maud Magee, 122 N. Johnson St., E. Los Angeles, California.

Just So So.

"Is your new book proving a great success?" she asked, for the purpose of giving the author to understand that she took a friendly interest in his work.

"Oh, it's doing fairly well," he answered. "I guess it will get enough sales to make it a boom. No public library has put it on the black list."

Boy's Secret Society—Membership Free.

Send 10 cents to U. S. A. Co., 1133 B'way, for great original and only secret society for boys under 15 years of age. Badges, signs, grips, passwords, secret emblems, secret language, fancy initiations, etc. The society is backed by all the leading men. Write to the parties with your religion or politics. Thousands of members wanted at once. Don't delay. Every boy can get a society by sending 10 cents to cover postage, name and the names of several boys you think would like to belong. Address USA STAR, 181 Marion Street, Oak Park, Ill.

An Advertising Novelty.

First Wayfarer—What a tremendous crowd standing around the new barber shop. The man in charge must be doing a great business.

Wayfarer—Yes. He hasn't named his place a "tonsorial parlor."

Fighting the Trust.

Our readers will no doubt remember how two lines of steamboats or two lines of railroads occasionally enter into a fight and reduce the rates and in some cases give away absolutely free to advertise their roads. One of the largest concerns in Chicago is fighting the trust and in order to advertise their goods are giving away thousands of handsome presents absolutely free. These presents consist of jewelry, hosiery, furnishing goods, books, music, toys, household ornaments, pictures, cutlery, glassware, etc. Every reader of this paper should write to their choice of 129 valuable presents free according to the offer of Larkin, Laughlin & Co., Dept. A, Chicago, Ill. While this fight is on we suggest that every reader of this paper write to these parties for their free and list of 130 valuable presents and illustrations. Don't delay. Take advantage of this golden opportunity. Write them today. They don't want you to sell anything nor will they sell the presents. They are giving them away as an advertisement. This offer will not appear again, therefore write today.

Proof at Hand.

First Politician—I read an article not long ago that said if Cuba was annexed it would take 10,000 officeholders to govern it.

Second Politician—Yes, sir! I tell you, prosperity follows the flag.

Blood Humors

Are prevented and cured by Hood's Sarsaparilla.

Because it cures the most tenacious forms of Scrofula, even when other remedies do no good;

Because it subdues and permanently relieves terribly agonizing cases of Salt Rheum;

Because it conquers the severest conditions of Blood poisoning and Hip Disease;

Because it so promptly corrects Biliousness, Headache, That Tired Feeling and Creates an Appetite.

Because it cures all other diseases caused by or originating in impure blood—Rheumatism, Catarrh, etc.

HOOD'S Sarsaparilla

Is the best Spring Medicine that money can buy.

TODAY.

BY ELLA MARTIN.

A bit of my childhood came back today,
As I leisurely strolled through the pasture lane,
And plucked the wild blossoms at my feet—
For the time I was almost young again.

And my youth came back in the cricket's song,
And a bit of my childhood again was seen,
In the willows that grew in a marshy place,
Close by the side of the meadow green.

Where the blackbirds piped in their own sweet way,
While they perched themselves in the branches low,
Just as they did when I sought their nests
To see where they hid, in the long ago.

And my heart grew light with the memory
Of the happy days that were so sweet,
And I just turned with strength and hope re-
dowed,
The present trials and cares to meet.

FOOLING THE DOCTOR.

"What is the new doctor's name?" inquired one of a group of girls of the druggist's boy.

"Hopkins," was the reply.

"Is he married?" asked another.

"I believe not."

"That settles it," said the third girl, Helen Clark. "The advent of a handsome young doctor in a little town like this an event not to be overlooked. Henceforth, I am an invalid."

"Kate, let's you and I become nurses," suggested Nettie Sanborn.

"Helen, I'll dare you to go home, make believe sick, tie up your head and send for the doctor. It will be rare fun," ventured Kate Upton.

"There isn't a soul at the house, so the coast is clear. I'll do it, if you'll go with me."

"Agreed," responded both girls; "we have no intention of being left out."

They were too intent on their fun to notice the roguish twinkle in the boy's eyes, and he did not consider it necessary to inform them that the gentleman under consideration was sitting in the druggist's private office, hearing every word.

The doctor was wondering whether he ought to be angry or enter into the spirit of the joke.

"I'll go," he decided, as the messenger summoned him to Judge Clark's residence.

Helen was on the sofa among a pile of pillows and made a charming invalid in spite of the wet bandage on her forehead. Her two friends were full of sympathy.

"Such a fearful headache, doctor; I am almost blind, can't you do something for it?" and the blue eyes turned to him pleadingly.

"Very well done," was the young man's mental comment.

He gravely felt her pulse, took her temperature and looked at her tongue.

"Your pulse is regular, your temperature is normal," he observed, slowly.

Helen, dear, didn't you say you had palpitation of the heart this morning, just dreadfully?" inquired Kate.

This was too much for Nettie; with a smothered laugh as she turned to the window.

Helen did not answer, but sunk back on the pillows, closing her eyes.

The doctor leaned forward and placed his ear over her heart. The blood rushed to her face; she felt like a culprit and was tempted to confess and beg his pardon. But that would never do. He would despise her for such a bold trick.

The physician looked thoughtful for a moment.

"What will he say? Oh, I wish he would go," sighed Helen to herself.

"I understand your case, Miss Clark," he explained. "It is serious—you will outgrow these attacks. I will leave a remedy which will relieve your headache in a few hours."

He opened his case and began preparing some powders in a very professional way, but slyly watching the girls all the time.

"There," as he finished the last powder, "take those every half hour; they are harmless. You are suffering from an acute attack of what the French call 'mechanacete,' and he bowed himself out.

"Mechanete," quick girls, get the French dictionary and see what this terrible malady is that I may outgrow. Do you suppose he is stupid enough to think I am very ill?"

"I believe he saw through it. I never felt so mean in all my life," declared Nettie, as she ran her forefinger down the "Mech" column. "Here it is." Oh, girls," and her face was scarlet, "just read that."

"Give it to me," cried Helen, "mechanacete, roguish trick, naughtiness," she read.

"He will probably tell this," said Nettie, "and before night this escapade will be all over town."

"I never speak to him again," exclaimed Helen. "Mechanacete, indeed! He's as mean as he can be."

"I don't blame him one bit," protested Kate. "It shows his spirit."

The following day Helen met the doctor on the street.

"I trust Miss Clark has recovered?" he inquired, smilingly.

"Perfectly, sir," was the haughty reply.

The winter, with its gayeties passed and everywhere Helen ignored him. Once he tried to defend himself, but she would not listen.

"If you were a gentleman, you would not refer to the humiliating circumstance," was her reply. "I will never forgive you."

"Helen, I think you treat Doctor Hopkins shamefully," said Nettie. "If used to think he was in love with you; have even followed you about and had such a pained look when you snubbed him."

"Nonsense! If he wants to make an idiot of himself I am not to blame."

"He won't bore you any more, my sweet friend," sauced Kate, "for he is to take Madge Stone to the lawn party tonight. Aren't you ashamed to leave him to the tender mercy of that heckled little thing, after he saved your life with his sugar powders?" and Kate laughed merrily.

"All the more fun for the lawn party; it was an annual affair given for the benefit of the public library and society attended in its best. Helen was not her usual merry self. She sat in a leafy corner of the arbor away from the crowd. Why did it annoy her that Doctor Hopkins should be attentive to Madge? Why was she unhappy? She would not allow herself to think of him. How she not said again and again that she hated him?

"Miss Helen," said a voice, which she knew well, and whose tones sent the color to her cheeks, "You look lonely."

"I am not. I prefer solitude, sometimes; at present, for instance."

He ignored her hint.

"Pardon me if I intrude; but I insist on knowing why you treat me so rudely. You will not even be friends, and"—his voice was low and tender—"I have ever dared hope we might be more. If you will only give me a chance."

"Excuse me, doctor, I fear I shall take cold in this corner," and she fled into the house.

That night the people were roused by cries of fire and with cries of the alarm, the fire service was inefficient and the citizens local in helping. Each one was braver or more helpful than the young doctor; he feared no risk and heeded no caution.

In his attempt to save a child from the flames he was struck by the falling timbers and they carried his unconscious form to Judge Clark's home near by.

"Is it fate or Providence?" thought Helen as she offered to watch beside him while her father summoned Doctor Goodspeed.

"What if he dies?" she moaned. The doctor groaned in his sleep slowly. "What has him so weak? Why this pain in his arm?

He could not move it. Where was he? Was that Helen Clark? He could hear the noise of the firemen outside, and it dawned upon him that he must be hurt. Then she approaching the couch. He closed his eyes, hardly daring to trust his vision.

She knelt beside him. The blood surged through his body and strength returned to every muscle as he felt her lips touch his and her hand open his brow. The closed eyes opened and met hers.

"Oh, you are not dead; I was afraid you would never open your eyes and would never know—" and she hid her face in her hands.

He tried to rise, but sank back with pain. "Dead, my love, no; only a few hurts. Doctor Goodspeed will soon be here."

He stretched out his uninjured arm and drew her to him.

"Helen, is it possible you love me?"

The touch of her lips upon his was the answer, but it meant more than words.

"And you have been cruel to me all these days. I thought you almost hated her."

"Forgive me; I loved you all the time, but was too proud to own it."

The task of dressing was delightful.

"Well, well, young man," said the doctor, as he bustled into the room, "this is a pretty state of affairs; a broken arm, half a dozen bruises and eyebrows singed off a handsome figure you cut among the girls now. Well, punish you by a few weeks of invalidism."

"I might enjoy the punishment if I had a good nurse."

The old man did not lose the glance he cast on Helen.

"Probably you would; I suspect you've some heavy trouble with all the rest, you young rascal." And he laughed knowingly.

"By the time that the second pair of shoes are buttoned the coiffure is readjusted. Then the actress stands up and the new dress is adjusted in a jiffy. If the change has had to be made while an act is on the stage there will have elapsed no more than five or six minutes. But that is exceptional. Ordinarily, or at most, with ten minutes allowed to it, the job has no appearance of fortune and is thoroughly is it rearranged."—Franklin Fyles in Ladies' Home Journal.

Choice of 120 Presents Free to Readers of This Paper.

W. F. McLaughlin & Co., Dept. A. Chicago, Ill., are the manufacturers of the celebrated XXXX coffee which is used in most every household. They are fighting the trust, and in order to induce the friends of our paper to ask for their coffee they have agreed to give away to our readers thousands of valuable presents, consisting of jewelry, heavy, burnished goods, books, music, toys, household ornaments, pictures, cutlery, glassware, etc. This is not a catch offer. They do not ask you to sell any goods or to send them any money. The presents which this concern are distributing are standard, first-class articles that are useful and necessary in every household where they will be a living advertisement of this concern's generosity as long as the presents are kept in the homes. W. F. McLaughlin & Co. are backed by millions of dollars and they propose to fight the trust regardless of cost to them. This offer will not appear again. Write for not an advertisement in any sense of the word, but a matter of news written by the editor of this paper for the benefit of our readers who wish to share in receiving these valuable presents put out by this mammoth concern. We urge you to write them a letter today asking them to send you a list and illustrations of the 120 valuable presents which they are giving away as above.

A Cat's Long Jump.

How far can a cat jump without hurting itself, was partly exemplified in Brooklyn the other night. A pretty white cat ran up a tree to get away from a dog and at last crawled out on a small branch at least sixty feet above the ground. The branch was not much more than a twig and the cat could not turn around. She sat up there on the swaying limb and meowed. At last the twig broke and down came the cat. She alighted on the ground on her feet, looked around for a moment and then bounded away, which shows that a sixty-foot drop does not hurt a Brooklyn cat, whatever it might do to cats of other places.

Knew His Products.

"He writes for the funny papers."

"Yes; it must be a funny paper that will print anything he writes."

GRATITUDE

Letters from Women Relieved of Monthly Pain by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

Painful Menstruation

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I was troubled with female weakness, irregular and painful menstruation. I suffered so every month that I was obliged to go to bed, but thanks to your medicine I am now well. I would advise all women who suffer as I did to use Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound."—MRS. ANNA LACY, Ross, Iowa.

Grateful Miss Muggelman

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I always suffered at time of menstruation ever since menses began, with bearing-down pains, sickness at stomach, sometimes vomiting for two days, sometimes vomiting blood. As I grew older, the suffering became worse. I tried many things, but obtained no relief. At last I concluded to try your medicine. I took several bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and followed your other directions, and now menstruation is painless. I feel as well now than I ever did. To your medicine, and never fail to recommend it. I am very thankful for what your medicine has done for me, and wish that every afflicted woman would try it."—HENRIETTA D. MUGGELMAN, 611 West Ave., Sidney, Ohio.

Prostration at Monthly Periods

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I was greatly troubled with menstrual pains. I was very weak and nervous, could not work at all. I have taken Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and several doses used in Sanative Pills and Sanative Wash, and am wonderfully improved in health. My neighbors are all surprised to see me out and doing my own work. I would advise every suffering woman to try Lydia E. Pinkham's remedies."—MRS. HENRY MUELLER, 843 McAlpin Ave., Clifton, Cincinnati, Ohio.

Irregular Menstruation

"DEAR MRS. PINKHAM:—I want to thank you for what Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done for my daughter. It has helped her very much. She had doctored for two years, but obtained no relief, and now in two months and a half she is well. Menstruation is now regular, appetite has returned, the pain has left her side and her headache is better. I feel very thankful to you also for your kind advice."—MRS. AUGUST PRALSNAR, South Byron, Wis.

Fifty thousand letters like these at Mrs. Pinkham's office in Lynn, Mass., prove that the safeguard of woman's health is

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S VEGETABLE COMPOUND

Dressing an Actress.

"While the actress is on the stage her maid has carefully laid out the gown she is to be put on, with all its accessories. The dresses are made with a view to celerity. Hardly anything is left to be fastened or. Knots of ribbons, draped sashes, pieces of jewelry, even corsage bouquets, are attached beforehand, in case there is not a minute to spare.

"A very modish and complete evening gown with everything belonging to it may be a single contrivance. The maid inspects it carefully to see that it is in completely good order, and deposits it on a chair. Close by she places the shoes, stockings, and whatever of millinery is to be worn.

"When the actress comes in she is deftly relieved of her gown which the audience has last seen her in. Next she sits before her mirror and if there is need of great haste, makes whatever rearrangement of hair or headdress is necessary while the maid takes off the shoes and stockings. Under the latter are different ones already on.

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IT'S SOMETIMES THE WAY.

He—I can't afford to send you to the Exposition, my dear. I have a lot of debts to pay off.

She—Why aren't you smart like Mr. Burns. His wife told me he only paid ten cents on the dollar. So the other ninety cents must be for her.

A GIRL REPORTER.

The Mystery of a Strange Mental Gift---The Curious Case Against Hathaway--- On a Robber's Trail.

By ALFRED B. TOZER.

Author of "The Melville Murder," "Something Wrong at the Bank," Etc.

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Begun in No. 18, May 5. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back numbers can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER IV.
EDITH'S DIAMONDS.

It was later than usual, the next day, when Harry Ellis made his appearance in the dining room of the ladies' and rather expensively furnished flatswhere he resided with his mother and sister Bertha, who was tastefully greeted by a pink-and-white kittenish way, and who, aided and abetted by her mother, daily dreamed many ambitious things of Harry's future, socially and financially considered.

The young man looked pale and troubled as he entered the apartment, and, dropping into an easy chair, took up the morning paper. With the glowing fire in the open grate to his back window, which faced the south and was now yellow with the light of the sun and bright with the noble green and the strong red and white of blossoming plants, and the white-draped table, glistening with silver and rare china, it was a pretty room, but Harry was in no mood to look for beauty anywhere save in a certain face and form about which he had dreamed through the whole of the previous night.

The Ellises were well housed, well gowned, and well fed, for the mother was possessed of quite a fortune of her own, left by her dead husband and securely invested, and Harry, whose income from the newspaper work was "about the right thing," as he expressed it, so the three, mother, son, and daughter, had all the comforts and many of the luxuries of life, and lived together on fairly good terms with each other, which is an unusual thing in these days of selfish fads and nerves.

The reporter read only the headlines in the morning paper and threw it aside as Bertha entered the room and stood beside him.

"You look tired," she said, brushing the hair back from his forehead with a caressing movement.

"Yes," was the languid reply. "We had a hard night at the office, and a most unsatisfactory one."

Bertha laid the morning paper from the carpet, where Harry had tossed it, and stood with her eye fixed on the first page, where the meager story of the diamonds flamed under false pretenses, six inches deep in job type headlines. There was nothing new told in the article Harry had written, but none of the headlines were large and artistically arranged, and this latter thing, in many modern offices, is considered equivalent to real news.

"I looked for something out of the ordinary in the Central bank case this morning," she said. "How does your new assistant get along with his work? It's a pity Mary Walters couldn't have the place. She is determined to enter the newspaper field and her application was filed a long time ago, you remember."

Harry faced his sister with a sudden, surprised interest in his eyes. He often discussed the matter with his mother and sister, but he was positive that on the previous evening he had not in any way referred to Edith Roberts, or to there being any new person in his department.

"How did you learn about the new assistant?" he asked. "She began work only yesterday."

Bertha ignored the question.

"How do you like Miss Roberts?" she asked, with a triumphant little laugh, which did not at all please her brother.

Harry turned away his eyes. He was fearful that his sister, Miss Edith might be discovered there. When he finally ventured a reply, his indolent manner had returned.

"I know very little of Miss Roberts," he said. "She seems to be bright enough and may succeed."

Then the dining room door opened and Mrs. Ellis entered—a pleasant-faced, keen-eyed lady of sixty, with abundant snowy hair and a form that was still supple and erect. She was dressed tastefully in black, with just a touch of color at the throat and looked forty-five instead of sixty, for her face had a calm dignity and a youthful spirit, and the wrinkles on her motherly face were few and far between.

"Good morning, mother," she said, advancing to the reporter's side. "You came in late last night, Harry. Have a smile, and hand me the new assistant had nothing to do with it. Now, what is the news? Tell me."

Harry looked from mother to sister with wondering eyes.

"Yes," he said, finally, "she did have something to do with it, but it was not her fault that I was out late. Do you all know her?"

"We know her," answered the mother. "Her people lived in our neighborhood when you were at college. I presume your being absent accounts for your not remembering her, as you must have heard us mention the family many times."

"I can recall no previous knowledge of either the girl or her mother," said Harry. "Have you met the young woman at that time?"

"Why, of course they were," replied Bertha. "It seems to me that you must remember me teasing mother for diamonds like those Edith Roberts wore."

"Diamonds!" repeated Harry. "Were they so well off as that? Did the diamonds come did Miss Edith wear?"

"Five ones, if you must tell you," was Bertha's reply. "She just took pride in flashing them into our eyes. And her mother! We ungracious folk had to call her the Gypsy Queen, and her servants used to chase up and down."

"Was Mrs. Roberts on the stage at that time?" asked Harry.

"I think not," replied the mother. "She lived there alone with her daughter and the servants for a good many years, then disappeared. I am sure no one about there knew where they went to, or why they left the neighborhood so mysteriously. They must have had a fortune in diamonds and gems of all kinds."

"It is the strangest thing in the world that you don't remember Edith Roberts, Harry. I used to ask about you. I am certain. Have you seen the poor creature?"

Harry nodded.

"I was obliged to go to Miss Roberts' home twice yesterday," he said, "and the last time on a very strange mission."

"You'll have me guessing at questions if you mix up with that crowd much," said Bertha. "Is the reporter up to some game with her yellow jewelry and her Gypsy school days? She seems to have made a smaller children of the neighborhood."

Harry smiled down into his sister's excited face, for he had been startled by the window during the conversation, and attacked her flighty nerves playfully.

"It's too bad," he said, "that Miss Edith got the place you had wanted for Miss Mary Walters, and you shall sputter away to your heart's content without my thinking any the worse of you for it, but, really, Miss Roberts is a charming girl, and we expect great things of her."

Bertha darted out of the room with her pretty chin in the air, and the mother advanced to Harry's side and laid her hand on his arm.

"Don't be hard with Bertha," she said "Remember that her disappointment is great. Is Edith, then, so very beautiful?"

"She is a very attractive young woman," was the reply. "But, tell me," he added, "what do you know about her diamonds?"

"Nothing whatever," was the reply, "except that they were large and beautiful, and that she, as Bertha says, liked to show them."

"Do you know whether they are still in the family?"

Mrs. Ellis shook her head.

"I lost track of the family years ago," she said.

Harry was wondering whether he ought to tell his mother of the remarkable incidents of the previous day, trusting to her knowledge of the world for practical advice, but he finally decided not to do so at that time.

"She will suspect my interest in Edith," he thought, "and may make me no end of bother. She can be told all about it later on."

During the luncheon hour Miss Mary Walters, Bertha's friend, was announced, and Bertha ordered the maid to show her to the dining room. The next moment she appeared in the doorway—an attractive young girl of twenty-two, dark haired, with pink cheeks and a willowy figure.

Bertha arose from the table and advanced to meet her.

"I am glad you came," she said, "for mother and I have been having an awful time with Harry. Just think of it! He positively refuses to remember anything whatever of Edith Roberts and her diamonds and her queer mother. She's the new girl on the Morning Record, you know, and I'm certain he's keeping her head in love with her."

Harry glanced up with an indulgent smile —just such a smile as he might have bestowed upon a petulant child.

"Come to think of it," he said, "she is rather pretty. Wouldn't it be a fine thing to have those diamonds in the family?"

"And the mother, too," ignored Bertha. "I never heard anything like the way he's been going on about her."

"About the mother?" asked Harry.

"No, sir," replied the girl. "About the daughter. I don't suppose she's got the diamonds now. Some one would have married her to get them before this."

She didn't wear them this morning if she has them," said the visitor. "She came down to the office in a plain dress, just now, and was dressed very plainly."

"She told you about her new position, I presume?" queried Bertha. "For my part, I can't see why she got it at all."

"She didn't see me," was the demure reply. "She was too busy talking with a handsome young man connected with the Central bank. Their heads were together all the way down."

"Do you know his name?" asked Harry, with a sudden serious interest in the conversation.

CHAPTER V.
MR. RICHARD HATHAWAY.

The visitor paused a moment before replying, and looked at Harry with curiosity showing in her face.

"I really can't recall the name," she said, "but Bertha may be able to. It's something phenomenal if I know my own name some times."

"I presume you are thinking of Mr. Hathaway," said Bertha, with a pretty blush, "only I can't see where she laid hold of him. He's engaged, you know."

Harry looked up with a quizzical smile on his face.

"Mr. Richard Hathaway in our set?" he asked.

"Why, of course," replied Mary, "and I think he's just splendid, too. Ask Bertha what I mean."

Mother and son glanced at each other with a mixture of surprise, apprehension, showing in their eyes, and Bertha blushed more than ever and turned her face away.

"I can't see how Edith Roberts ever reached her tormentor. "I know what I know of Richard Hathaway, and shadowy corners, when the music outside plays soft and low, are not his style. Hathaway's a charming gentleman, any way, but I don't see what he can have in common with Edith Roberts."

This Edith Roberts must be a terrible creature," said Mary, "for every one of the treatment Edith was receiving at the office. Why, you should see the looks that Miss Ellis would give her! I'm a bitter remark from Harry. "We may as well get out of the way of the storm. Miss Ellis will fire our petty bullets at Edith Roberts and Richard Hathaway sometime when they are not expecting them, I suppose."

The girls hastened away to Bertha's room and left Harry with his mother.

"All this talk about Bertha and Richard Hathaway is nonsense, my boy," he said. "How long has it been going on?"

"Nearly a month," was the reply. "And he comes here?"

"Certainly."

"And what does Bertha say about it?"

The troubled look on the kindly face of the mother deepened.

"She says nothing," was the reply. "But words are not always a safe guide one in matters of this sort. I have every reason to believe she is not indifferent to him."

"Is Hathaway?"

"Oh, he is undeniably fond of her. How can he help it? A pretty girl! And he don't want any man to be fond of Bertha, for I am not deceived, though he may be. I used to admire and respect Mr. Hathaway, but I can't believe that he wants to come and take Bertha away from us. I never want to see his face again."

Harry stood for a moment seemed to the mother a long time before he spoke. He was thinking rapidly, and his thoughts were not pleasant ones. Here was his mother, to whom he was devoted, thinking Bertha's self over a possible love affair of Bertha's. The man in the case, Mr. Richard Hathaway, was one of the best men over of the social world, an eligible party. He was handsome, reputed to be wealthy, and, what is still better than all, he was a gentleman by birth and breeding.

Now, here was his own little love affair of a day and a night. What would his mother say to that when she knew? For Harry had no idea of defeat in the matter. He realized that he was desperately in love with Edith Roberts. He had no doubt that he might, if he chose, after a time of waiting and wooing, make her his wife.

But what would the mother say to that? Edith was handsome, but that was all. She was not wealthy; she was not a social favorite. She was educated and refined, but there was the active opposition of his sister. There were no doubts in his own mind as to what he ought to do.

For there was Miss Mary Walters, the girl who had just left the room, with her tell-tale eyes shining with love of him; the girl in whose interest Bertha would resort to almost any means to lessen his regard for Edith. Once a year or so before, Harry and Mary had nearly reached the stage of engagement, for she was a vivacious, chummy little thing, just like Bertha, and Harry admired women of that sort. They had had rapid drives and walks together, through a sweet vacation time, while the mother and Bertha looked on with approval.

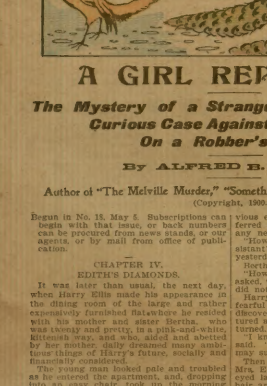
But it had never come to the point of tender words and the exchange of fonder vows, though Harry had often wondered why. Perhaps it might have been different if the mother and sister had not pushed the affair a little too eagerly. They had not yet abandoned hope, and Mary was handsomer and brighter and chummier than ever this winter, and the manly one thinks about the feet of the young man.

He thought it all over as he stood there at his mother's chair and stroked a silvery curl hanging over her smooth forehead.

"Well, mother," he said, "it seems to be the only competent judge in this case, so we must stand back and allow matters to take shape without our interference. I quite agree with you that Richard Hathaway is not half good enough for our little Bertha; but, then, no one ever will be, in our eyes, so we must leave the matter to the good sense of the one most interested. Bertha is certainly old enough to care for herself, and Hathaway is not a bad fellow."

"I can't help it," replied the mother, "I am afraid of Richard Hathaway. I don't know why, but his face haunts me sometimes as the face of a man about to bring trouble to us all. I can't bear to have Bertha with him any more. I'm foolish, I suppose I must make the best of it."

There were traces of tears in the mother's



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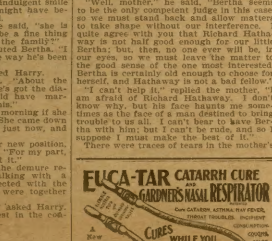

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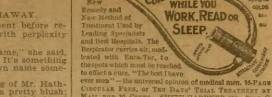

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eyes as she spoke, and Harry had occasion, long afterwards, to recall the scene with remorse in his heart.

"I am sure," continued Mrs. Ellis, in a moment, "I wish Miss Edith Roberts all the happiness in the world, but it would be a heaven-sent blessing to me if the talk of of the girls here this morning should prove to have some foundation in truth. That would rid us of Mr. Richard Hathaway for all time. I must ask the girls if they really have any idea that he is interested in Miss Roberts."

"I don't see how he can be, if she is not in his set," replied Harry. "It may be that she met him for the first time yesterday in connection with the diamond case and perhaps that is what they were talking about this morning on the car."

"You put all my fond dreams to flight," smiled the mother. "I hope you are not taking a special interest in your new assistant, Harry? I can't have you bothering me, now that I have Richard Hathaway on my hands."

"I'll let you know in time for the wedding," was the laughing reply. "Of course you heard what the girls said about Miss Roberts?"

Mrs. Ellis nodded.

"Well," began Harry, "now tell me what you think about the girl and her mother. I may be obliged to work with Edith all winter, and I, of course, want to know something about her."

"I know very little about them," was the reply, "and cannot therefore render a valuable opinion. And, you know, I have not seen either of them, or even heard of them until now for a long time, at least half a dozen years."

"What sort of people visited them when they lived in our neighborhood, years ago?"

"Theatrical people, mostly."

"Of the better class?"

"I think so. Mrs. Roberts had made some kind of a hit, I believe, in creating a part, and was known to be rich. Her parties were regarded as very respectful, but she had a circle of her own, and few of our set attended them."

"And the diamonds? Do you recall them?"

"Only faintly. Edith used to come romping into our house now and then with a small fortune in gems distributed about her person, but I paid very little attention to her or them. Her mother was said to be an expert in the matter of diamonds."

"You don't know how they came to lose ther property?"

"Certainly not. I did not even know that they had lost it."

"Was there a Mr. Roberts in those days?"

"I never heard of such a person."

"Were Edith and Bertha much together?"

"I think not. They did not agree, if I remember correctly. But the girls will soon be here, and I must be ready for the ride I proposed in the interest of peace and harmony."

The blood beat quick in Harry's heart as he left the room and turned toward the office. He could not forget that he was to meet Edith there. He wondered whether the young bank clerk rode in the car with her every morning; whether he lived out there in the suburbs near her home; even whether he had not had something to do with the manner in which Edith had handled the diamond case.

He wondered, too, whether he ought not to drive all thoughts of the girl from his mind. To go on might mean a serious rupture with his mother and sister, who might, for his sake, overlook the social failings of the young girl, but would never, never, be brought to recognize the actress mother.

CHAPTER VI.

TRACING THE DIAMONDS.

When Harry arrived at his den, as he called it, in the newspaper building he found Edith waiting for him, looking prettier than ever in a blue cloak trimmed with white fur. She looked at her desk in a square of sunlight which fell from a window facing the south, and the warm glow shining in her eyes and reflected in her nut-brown hair seemed a part of her own personality rather than an outside illumination. In a moment all the reporter's doubts and fears were sent sailing to the winds of heaven. He knew that he should doubt again in the worldly atmosphere of his own home, but he could not doubt in her presence.

In a moment he found a brief note asking him to call at the city editor's room before mixing with the events of the day.

"Have you seen Mr. Hughes?" he asked, turning to Edith when he had finished reading the note.

The girl nodded.

"He came in here a few moments ago," she said, "and left that note, but he scarcely noticed me. Does the note say that he wants to see me? I hope not, for I am almost afraid of him."

"Your fears are groundless," replied the reporter, with a smile. "When you become better acquainted with our city editor you will discover him to be a very amiable man."

"I am glad of that," said Edith, bending over her work again. "I want to be on good terms with all the newspaper people, for, you know, I am ambitious, and mean to get almost to the top."

"Your industry will help you about that," said Harry. "What have you found to write about so early in the day?"

"About the diamonds, of course," was the reply. "You shall see, when you come back, whether it is worth space in the paper."

When Harry entered the city editor's room he found Hughes busy with the assignments of the day. He looked up with a peculiar smile as the reporter stepped up to his desk, but went on with his work, so Harry walked over to the window and looked out at the city from an elevation of nine stories.

"It is all a moral wilderness out there, and Self is the Master of the Jungle," he muttered, thinking that the irregular roofs of the line of houses across the way resembled a set of snarling teeth, ready to mangle and devour whoever might come there seeking gain or advancement. It was a queer fancy for an unimaginative man, but the reporter was in love, and love is a wonderful tonic to the imagination.

Presently he heard Hughes calling to him and he went and stood by his table.

"I have detailed Pixley on general criminal matters," Hughes said, "and you are to follow the diamond case until further orders. Miss Roberts will assist you. Have you anything to suggest?"

"I was thinking that I might make a good story of the Toledo affair by going there," said Harry. "Though something may turn up here later in the day."

"Use your own judgment," said Hughes. "Anything from Miss Roberts thus far today?"

"She was writing when I came in," was the reply.

"Don't try to influence her work," said Hughes, "or to urge the exercise of this peculiar faculty—which is not the correct name for it, but I can't think of a better. This is a mighty queer piece of business, you understand, and natural, preternatural, or supernatural, I mean to get to the bottom of it. We can classify the thing, if we can't do anything else with it."

"Yes, I presume so," said Harry, who did not relish the idea of Edith being used as a dummy for the city editor's experiments in the unknowable, "only it may be a little tough on the girl."

"There is still a possibility that the girl is fooling us in order to attract attention to herself," Hughes observed, in a moment, "and this is one phase of the case that must not be overlooked. Have you learned anything of the family since last night?"

"A number of years ago," was the reply, "they were considered very wealthy. They resided in a fashionable neighborhood, and, I am told, were noted for the remarkable number and quality of their diamonds."

"It is well to know this."

"And the girl used to ornament herself with the gems and flaunt her splendor in the eyes of the children of the neighborhood," continued the reporter, "she being a wee thing at the time."

Hughes laughed.

"Some woman told you that," he said. "No man would have remembered such an event. Have you talked with her about the Toledo incident of yesterday?"

Harry replied in the negative.

"I mean to do that when I go back," he said. "She was writing on the diamond case when I left her just now," he added, "and may have something new by this time."

Harry arose to go, but stopped with his hand on the door.

"Do you know Richard Hathaway, of the Central bank?" he asked.

"Is he a society young man?"

"I believe so."

"Then I know the man you mean. Is he in any way connected with this matter?"

"Not that I know of," was the reply. "What do you think of the fellow?"

"Oh," was the reply, "he's a little swift, I guess, but not a bad sort of a chap. His father left him quite a lot of money. Lucky fellow, eh?"

Harry turned toward the door again, but Hughes stopped him.

"What became of the Roberts' diamonds?" he asked.

"I couldn't learn that," was the reply. "Possibly Edith may be looking them up now," he added, with a laugh.

Hughes sprang to his feet.

"I wonder," he said, slowly, motioning Ellis to return and close the door, "if there is anything in that? When she came to me yesterday morning to see about the place she said there were very special reasons why she should be employed on the Central bank case. Now what do you think of that?"

Ellis threw himself into a chair and drew his hand over his eyes.

"We are stumbling along in darkness," he said. "The farther we go, the blacker it gets, but I can't believe that Miss Roberts is deceiving us. You did not think so yourself last night."

"I don't think so now," was the reply, "but nothing must be overlooked which may account for the strange condition of affairs. The thing for you to do now is to find out who owns the diamonds. As you hinted a moment ago, they may be the property of Mrs. Roberts, and the girl may be more anxious to recover them than to gain a newspaper reputation."

"The bank ought to know about the ownership of the diamonds?" said Ellis.

"They were placed on deposit by a firm of lawyers," was the reply, "and that is all the bank knows about them."

"Have you the name of the firm?"

Hughes lifted a card from the table and read out a name and address.

"MacBride & Company, Ashland building."

"Have they refused to name the owner of the stones?"

"Not to my knowledge."

"Then I'll go there at once."

The reporter dashed out of the room and, at the end of half an hour, rushed back again.

"It's no use," he said. "They refuse to give the slightest information."

"Well," said the city editor, "we have guessed to the limit, I imagine. The diamonds have disappeared. It is our task to find them, by second-sight, by unconscious hypnotism or otherwise. When you get Miss Roberts' work today bring it to me."

The city editor resumed his work and Harry went back to his room, where he found a little heap of manuscript lying on his table. Miss Roberts was not there.

In ten minutes he was back in Hughes' room, the manuscript in his hand, a scared look on his face.

"What is it?" asked Hughes.

"Witchcraft," was the reply. "This story takes up the case the moment the diamonds reached Toledo and follows them about the streets and to the pawnshop. It says that only a very small portion of the smallest of them were offered for pledge, and that the remainder are now in the custody of the riverman, who was slightly wounded in his fight with the officers at the time the effort was made to arrest him."

Hughes took the written sheets into his hand and read them through very deliberately.

"The days of miracles have returned," he said, after finishing the reading. "Is it possible that this girl can have natural knowledge of this? Impossible! She couldn't have secured the information from the papers, for nothing like this came by wire last night. In fact, nothing like it could come by wire, for this takes the matter beyond the knowledge possessed by the officers. Where is Miss Roberts now?"

"I don't know," was the reply. "She left the room before my return."

"When she comes back let me know."

But when Harry again sought his room, the girl was there, sitting limply before her desk with her head resting on her hands, which lay on the edge of the table. He spoke to her, but she did not move. He stepped closer and laid his hand lightly on her head. Still no indication of life. Then her hands slipped away from their support, and but for Harry's sustaining arms, she would have fallen to the floor.

HE SPOKE TO HER BUT SHE DID NOT MOVE.

Another installment of this story will appear next week. Prospective subscribers are referred to premium offers on pages thirteen and fifteen.

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A BATTLE FOR JUSTICE.

The Strange Story of Hugh Vinton's Ward --- A Curious Piece of Villiany --- The Valley Iron Works Strike.

By J. HOWARD BAUMAN.

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Begun in No. 17, April 28. Subscriptions can begin with that number, or back copies can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TELEPHONE PLAYS AN IMPORTANT PART.

The next day bright and early, Areta was in the secretary's office. Hugh had some business to attend to in another part of the city; so his ward had volunteered to stay in his office and do some writing for him. She was becoming quite an expert in manipulating the typewriter, thereby making herself very useful to her guardian; and as Areta despised an idle life, this employment of her time was a source of pleasure to her.

When she entered the room this morning, contrary to the usual custom she did not raise the blind that covered the glass in the door which led to the main hallway. This would have been where accustomed to the hauts of the place that the office was unoccupied. Presently Areta heard footsteps ascending the stairway. She was very much interested in her work, and paid no further attention to the matter than to glance at the door. She noticed that the blind had not been raised, but she did not bother to go and fix it. The footsteps grew fainter as the person went on down the long hallway.

"That must be Mr. Hawkins or Harold," thought the girl, "if it was Harold he would never dream of finding me here at this time, and that is why he did not stop; and I am glad he didn't, because I have no time to talk to him this morning; for I must get these letters answered. I wonder if Hugh would raise me very much if I were to get married? There is something about Harold I cannot understand. Why is he in such a hurry to get married? I wonder why he turned in favor of the men so suddenly, and then the same night came to our house. If I could only feel certain that there was not an evil motive behind his actions, I believe I could care enough for him to be his wife; but that is just it; I cannot feel the implicit faith in him that a woman should in the man she marries. Oh, dear! Here I sit day-dreaming, and this pile of work to do."

Areta's reflections were rudely cut short by the loud ting-a-ling, ting-a-ling of the telephone bell.

"I am not certain that that was two rings; it may have been only one, but I guess I had better answer it anyway," said Areta to herself.

Gathering a lot of papers from her lap, she laid them on the desk and went over to the telephone. She soon had the receiver to her ear and called loudly: "Hello! Hello! Although she repeated the call several times she got no answer. She was sure the person call the secretary's office of the Valley Iron Works wanted it. Still no answer came. She could not catch the faint murmur of voices over the wire.

"Hello, central, can't you get me three sixty-five, ring one?" asked a voice over the wire.

"That is the president's office number," flashed through the girl's mind as she held the receiver to her ear. Either some unaccountable impulse, or some strange power prompted her to keep the receiver to her ear. It was fully a half minute later when the girl heard the person at the telephone ask Central to ring the number called again. She had the operator's answer distinctly: "I cannot get any person at that number; there is no person in the office, or Mr. Hawkins has left the receiver off of the hook, which by very closely does. You had better call up again in a few minutes."

At this moment Areta caught the sound of echoed voices some time much more distinctly than before. "Central is right," breathed the girl to herself; "Hawkins has left the receiver off the hook; for I can recognize his voice. Whew! He must be angry; just listen to him rave at—what was that he said something about Vinton's ward. He means me; now I will listen in earnest."

"I tell you plainly, Spencer," he was saying, "I believe you are playing me false."

"And I tell you, you old dude head, that I am not," she heard the voice of Harold Spencer answer.

"Then give me some proof that you are telling me the truth."

"I told you once that I was only playing the convert until Areta Harlan was my wife."

"What if you did? I have no proof that you were telling me the truth."

"What more do you want?"

"You say that you have your plans well laid to keep Vinton from the meeting tomorrow afternoon?"

"Yes, I can rest assured that Vinton will not be at the meeting."

"Will you display enough confidence in me to tell me how you are going to prevent him from being on hand?"

"You know he goes to Camden tomorrow morning and expects to get back about noon."

"Yes; I have heard you say so a dozen times.

"And didn't I tell you that I had made arrangements with a couple of trustworthy men who would make it their especial business to see that Vinton does not return until after three-thirty."

"I know you did; but I do not understand how it is to be managed."

"Decoy! You old blockhead. I don't believe you could see through a mill stone if the whole center was chiseled out of it."

"And if that plan fails?"

"Well, in that case, my friends would send him and the whole boat, if need be, to the bottom of the river before they would allow him to get back in time to vote."

"Why are you so bitter toward Vinton?" asked the voice of Hawkins.

"Because I hate him; I hate the accursed cattle, whose cause he is upholding, and I would rather see him dead at my feet, than to receive a gift of a thousand dollars. There, that is why I hate him. I think you have a stronger motive than mere hate for wishing Vinton out of the way."

"Maybe I have, Hawkins; but we will not discuss that matter at present time."

"Are your plans all perfected?"

"Yes, the trap is set ready for the game."

"Well, we will know tomorrow night how much of a plotter you are—or a villain—which?"

"Don't get too sarcastic; if it was not for me I think pretty certain that you would be able to add 'has been' to your name."

"That's right, you conceited ass; take all the credit home to your self; but remember the next thing you will say is that I would be a beggar in the street if it were not for you."

That was all of the conversation that Areta could hear, but it was enough to make the heart of the girl flutter. Such a deep, villainous motive in wanting her to become his wife. She also knew that there was a motive behind that, and to keep Hugh from attending the directors' meeting that afternoon. Areta knew, by what she had heard, these men would resort to any means to gain their ends. Areta followed the receiver to its place, which was to try to find Hugh at once and tell him all she had heard through the telephone. But, alas, how sorrowful! How she did bless it and its inventor as she hurried along the street toward her home.

She went at once to the room of Mrs. Smithson, which, by the way, was now their salaried housekeeper. When she found her she breathlessly excited to know what she was about.

"Where is Hugh? Quick! Tell me where he is!" cried the girl.

"He went out shortly after you left," answered the housekeeper. "For what on earth has happened? You act as if you had seen a ghost."

"Have you any idea where he went?"

"He said that he was going to the post-office and then to the Chestnut street car."

"Oh, dear! I wonder where he is? I must —I must find him at once!"

"What has happened?"

"I must find Hugh; there is a terrible plot afoot to keep him from the directors' meeting."

"How did you find it out?"

"Oh! Hawkins must have left the receiver of his telephone off the hook; for I heard every word that passed between him and Harold Spencer as plainly as if I had been in the room."

"Harold Spencer! What can he have to do with it?"

"Everything; he is at the bottom of it all; and I never want to hear his name mentioned again. I have found out that he is a base villain."

"And I regret that he was in love with you; and that he intended to vote in favor of recognizing the union."

"So did I; but now he had some vile motive in talking the way he has been doing for some time. Oh, dear! What if you, I heard him say he hated Hugh and that he would rather see him dead at his feet than to receive a thousand dollars as a gift."

"The dirty wretch!" exclaimed Mrs. Smithson in righteous anger.

"But I must not keep wasting valuable time; I must hurry to find Hugh. I will walk up Chestnut street; maybe I will meet him. If he returns here before I do, have him wait for me." As Areta gave this hurried instruction she started for the door. As she opened it she came face to face with the district messenger boy, who was just reaching for the bell button. He handed her a sealed note, which she stepped back into the hallway to read. As she finished, an exclamation of dismay broke from her lips:

"My God! Is fate against us? This was the news which the note parted:

"Dear Areta: I am called out of town on business of the most important kind. I will not be home tonight, but will go direct from Trenton, where I am bound for, to Camden. Look out for me at noon. Yours in haste—Hugh."

As Areta read the note a look of dismay in keeping with her words settled over her face.

"What can I do now?" she asked the housekeeper, after that lady had read the note.

"I am sure that I am unable to advise you, my dear child," answered Mrs. Smithson.

"I know one thing I will do at once; I will telegraph him at Trenton, and the Western Union people will surely try to find him."

"Yes," assented the housekeeper, "you had better do that. You write the message and I will ring in the call."

Areta hastily penned the following:

"To Mr. Hugh Vinton, Care of Hotels, Trenton, New Jersey—Come home on first train. Grave trouble ahead.—Areta."

"Now, I wonder what next?" she asked herself as she finished the telegram. Areta wisely decided that the next would be to go and see Mr. Harper, Hugh's lawyer. She was soon at his office; and for a wonder, found the gentleman at his desk. Without waiting for any greetings the girl exclaimed: "Oh, Mr. Harper, a terrible thing has come! Mr. Vinton went to Trenton this morning, and will not be home until tomorrow noon, and I have just discovered a plot to keep him away from the directors' meeting in the afternoon. What will I do?"

"I must hear more of your story before I can be of any assistance to you," answered the man of law.

Areta repeated the story of her discovery in detail, just as it has already been told. When she had concluded he told her that she had done right to come to the start.

"What can be done next?" she asked.

"You had better wait until you see whether your telegram reaches Mr. Vinton or not. If it does not, you will send men to all the ferry landings the first thing in the morning; especially on the other side of the river, where he does not use much the Market street line most frequently."

"I am going to do that and more," replied Areta.

"Furthermore, you had better send a message to Camden the first thing in the morning, for I think it will find him even if the other one fails."

"Do you think it would be worth while for me to go to either Trenton or Camden and try to find him?"

"No, I do not; besides you will be needed here; for if Hugh does not arrive home by four, he will have to spring some bluff on his enemies."

"How will you do it, Mr. Harper?" asked Areta.

"For one thing, you will have to attend that meeting as a substitute and claim that you have the authorized power to cast his vote."

"Do you think they would allow such a thing?"

"That is more than I can say at the present; but as I believe we have a bluff our way through. You come here again in the morning, and we will conclude our plan of action. In the meantime, I trust you will hear from Mr. Vinton."

The girl left the office with a lighter heart than she had when she entered it.

Although Areta waited until after midnight, not a word did she receive from Hugh. The district messenger service had surely failed to find Hugh Vinton. It was with forebodings of evil that Areta Harlan sought her bed that night.

The next day dawned bright and warm. The anxiously awaited-for twenty-fifth had arrived at last. This was the day that was expected to settle the fate of the employes of the old Valley mill. Tom Harrison would either get all he has asked, the union recognized, and everything peacefully settled and the mill ready to run again; or the men would take matters in their own hands, and try to force a settlement.

Up until noon not a word had been heard of Hugh. According to agreement, a man had been dispatched to every boat or ferry landing on the other side of the river. Another telegram had been sent over to Camden, to go the rounds of the hotels.

Slowly but surely the hands of the clock moved around, and the fate of hundreds were ticked into the past.

Two o'clock and still no signs of Hugh. Areta's despair increased with every minute of life.

"Oh, Hugh! Why don't you come?" the girl would cry out every few minutes. "If I could only do something. I am afraid that I will not be recognized as his legal substitute when his name is called; votes I am almost certain that the cause of those present will be lost, if he would only come. It is not yet his set time to return, I know; but something tells me that he is in trouble of some kind."

To escape the awful suspense which was almost driving her wild, Areta started to walk toward the mill. As she neared it, she noticed a large number of men gathered around the premises.

"If those men only knew the danger Hugh is in, they would help to find him, I am sure," thought the girl.

A wild idea entered her brain; and she was quick to act upon it. Seeing a large man near the fence, which encircled the mill, Areta stepped upon it and called out to those around her:

"Men, I trust you will pardon me for this unladylike action, but I want to tell you that Hugh Vinton is in great peril. As most of you know, Hugh Vinton has one hundred

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votes on the question of granting or refusing your request, or your demands, that your union be recognized. Now, as every one of you are aware, his vote is pledged to your cause. You also know that you have some bitter enemies. These enemies have a plot on hand to keep Hugh Vinton from the meeting this afternoon. It does not matter how I found out, suffice to say that I have positive information entirely unknown to your enemies. I have not seen Mr. Vinton since yesterday morning. When he left he expected to be in Camden this morning. I have done my best to find him by telegraph, and warn him of his danger but I have failed. Now, men, if you love your cause well enough to take the trouble, I will ask you all to try to find Hugh Vinton, warn him of his danger, and see that he reaches the meeting place safely before three-thirty this afternoon. Remember, if he fails to be there your cause is lost."

The effect that the girl's words had upon those sturdy men was wonderful. The excitement was at fever heat. One of them threw his hat into the air as he yelled at the top of his voice: "Bravo! Bravo, Vinton!" "Three cheers for Vinton's ward," cried another.

"Hurrah for the union!"

"Union! Union! Union forever!" Such were the cries of the men.

Areta's eyes filled with tears of joy as she perceived the heartfelt manner in which her words were received by these sons of toil.

A hundred men started out in search of Hugh Vinton; some going one way and others another way. Every man who volunteered the necessity of finding their union's champion held in the hands of the clock pointed to three-thirty.

CHAPTER VII.

THE DIRECTORS' MEETING.

The hands of fate was surely working against the cause of union. It was now one o'clock and the wheels-boats of Hugh Vinton was as much of a mystery to those mostly concerned as ever. Again Areta went to the lawyer's office for the last consultation before putting their plan into action.

"Nothing has been heard from Hugh, Mr. Harper, and I am so worried that I hardly know the way to turn. I will leave it all in your hands and do just as you say; for so far as I am concerned, I am not culpable of anything today." Areta was very much excited as she spoke.

"Calm yourself, Miss Harlan; then we will conclude our plans to checkmate those deep-dyed scoundrels," said the lawyer.

"But I am so afraid that something terrible has happened to Hugh."

"That part of it does not worry me at all; for I am very confident that Hugh Vinton is well able to take care of himself at all times, and under any circumstances."

"I am glad that you are so confident of his safety; but I cannot help worrying after knowing that unprincipled villains have to deal with."

"Well, now to business; you say the vote is to be taken at three-thirty?" asked the lawyer.

"Yes, sir."

"Well, you must be there armed with certain powers giving you the authority to vote his shares."

"How am I to get these papers?" asked the girl, doubtfully.

"I can easily draw up the proper papers; but what shall we do in the time, how are we to get Hugh Vinton's autograph affixed thereto?"

"I am afraid that I cannot imitate his handwriting well enough to do it for him."

"I am pretty clever with the pen and I might be able to counterfeit the signature, piece of forgery in a satisfactory manner," said Mr. Harper.

"I am sure Hugh would not care," added Areta.

"Well, I should rather think not."

Lawyer Harper went into an inner room, and shortly returned with a paper bearing the true signature of Hugh Vinton. He picked up his pen and began his efforts to imitate the signature. Harper kept this up for ten minutes, with as yet no satisfactory result. "Not so easy as it looks to be," he remarked to Areta at the end of that time.

"I have an idea!" suddenly exclaimed the girl.

"Indeed! Will you be kind enough to express your idea in words; it might help us out of this predicament that we find ourselves placed in."

"The other day Hugh signed his name to some blank sheets of paper which were to be filled out in the form of a contract by some one. I was to do this after he left but as the parties did not come around the papers were never filled in. They are still in my desk in his office. How would it do to fill one of these in to answer our purpose? There would be no forgery in that, for the signature will be true."

"Yes, even if the writing over the name is of a different nature than that which he intended to be," replied Mr. Harper. "But it will be just what we want. Have you the office key with you?"

"Yes, sir; I have it in my pocketbook."

"Good! go get the papers at once. Remember, you have not much time to lose, for in an hour and a half you must be behind the door closed of the directors' meeting."

Excitement lent speed to the girl's feet, and in a very few minutes she was back at the lawyer's office with the two sheets of paper, each one blank with the exception of the lower left-hand corner, of each sheet, on which was written in a bold business hand, "Hugh Vinton."

"Have you run all the way?" asked Mr. Harper, as Areta entered the office entirely out of breath.

"No, sir; I did not run a step; I walked the whole way."

"You are a good walker," commented the lawyer.

"I guess I am."

"Well, now to work again. We must get this forged signature written over the real signature. Set me see," meditatively. "How shall I write this? What sentiment? We must date it, of course; but not this date, for that would give it dead away. Ah! for that would give it dead away. Ah! I've got my sentiment and my date, why did he not?" turning to Areta.

"Yes, sir."

"Then we must date this forgery before in the last degree."

After drafting several letters the lawyer finally decided on the following was best suited for the purpose:

"Philadelphia, Pa., September 23, '98. To Whom it may concern: This is to certify that I this day invest in Areta Harlan, my ward, the full and unlimited authority to act for me in the matter of business requiring my decision. I agree to be held accountable for all her acts or decisions. Should it be that she the authority to vote my shares at the next meeting of the directors of the Directors of the Valley Iron Works company, on the twenty-fifth, I will be responsible for unavoidably the absent therefrom.

(Signed) Hugh Vinton."

"Frank S. Harper, witness."

"There," said the lawyer with an air of satisfaction as he handed the forgeries to Areta for her inspection, "I should think that will perform its mission; for the simple reason that it is impossible to detect a forgery of the Valley Iron Works, and if the manager, Mr. Hawkins, should find it out they will allow your vote to stand."

"Don't you think it possible that it would be for you to be near at hand during the meeting? Some points may be brought up that would make it necessary to be called upon to do so."

"Very well, Miss Harlan, if you think you would feel more confident with me present, I will remain in the office of my lawyer."

Hope, fear and doubt chased each other in quick succession through Areta Harlan's brain. But as all things have an end, so had the time of the meeting, which was 3 p. m. The hour for the meeting to be called to order arrived.

Hugh Vinton was not present; but his absence had been expected, and for some preliminary matters had been disposed of. The president, Mr. Hawkins, called for the report. Mr. Hawkins began at the day after his last report had been made at the preceding meeting, and followed the course of events down to the present time, as with the men.

"Why were you so opposed to granting the men's request for higher wages? Would it been out of our pockets in comparison to the way you have increased the profits thus far?" angrily asked Mr. Williams, a prominent stockholder.

"Principle, my dear sir, principle. I was elected to the office of president to represent the interests of others. You suppose that I am going to allow a lot of stubborn workmen to dictate to me how I shall run this mill? No, sir; I would see them damned first!"

"Yes, and see all our interests run into the ground before you would listen to your fellow-men," returned Mr. Williams.

"Pride nothing," angrily retorted Mr. Jackson, another stockholder. "Principle and I, Sir one, will not allow my interest in this mill to be ruined by any man's caprice or the fellow creatures just because they have been born to the misfortune of the world of toil and strife than he happens to have been."

The policy of Mr. Jasper Hawkins was receiving far more criticism and less endorsement than had been anticipated.

"It is a good thing for me that Spencer got rid of Vinton for the day," muttered the president, but I thought sure that Jackson would be on hand."

Hawkins could count on one confederate in the event of Spencer, who had sworn he was true to him in all things.

"Gentlemen, I beg your pardon. Lady and gentlemen," said Harold Spencer, rising to his feet, "I think you are unjustly criticising our worthy president's actions in the unpleasant affair of these days of ungratefulness and the stubbornness on the part of the workmen. The blame for the awkward position we find ourselves placed in, does not rest on the shoulders of our president, which the records in my father's books will show, who have drawn money from the company for the last twenty years. One of these men is Jim Harrison, a fellow employe of the mill, he. Many more owe their existence to the generous care of our president, the late lamented Spencer did not say what he had intended to. Evidently he had forgotten the part he was playing. As he caught the scornful glance of Areta Harlan's eye scintillating upon him, he realized the mistake he had just made. He never dreamed that the girl already knew of the plot to betray us; but he knew well enough that he had betrayed his duplicity by those last few words. With a stammered excuse he sat down again.

"How comes it that our secretary, Hugh Vinton, is absent?" asked a member of the company. Harold and the president exchanged knowing glances at this question, which did not escape the sharp eyes of Areta.

It seems very strange to me that Vinton should be absent from this meeting above all others. We never had any such trouble as this before we put the executive power in the hands of the president. I voted against it at the time, and I can plainly see the wisdom of doing so this minute if at no other time," said Mr. George Johnson, another influential member of the Valley Iron Works company.

"I too, see the wisdom of your foresight in voting the way you did at that meeting, and I am sorry to say that on that occasion I voted against you," added Mr. Jackson.

While it looked very much as if Harold had succeeded in his plan to keep Vinton from the meeting, on the other hand he felt certain that his scheme to win the heiress and her money had failed. "If she won't, I have one of her own from whom I am sent of ignorance, so she simply answered: "My guardian left home yesterday morning to go to Trenton, and I have heard nothing from him since. He expected to be home at noon today, and I feel certain that it is against his will he is absent."

"Do you know anything about him, Mr. Spencer?" asked the same gentleman.

"His absence is very strange, and a little off his guard. His face turned scarlet and he began pale as a sheet. A number of eyes were turned to the young man; but only two knew that he had any reason for the apparent agitation he betrayed. They were the shrewd secretary's ward and Spencer Hawkins' self. Spencer could control his voice he answered: "I know nothing about him."

"Liar!" breathed Areta to herself. "You know where he is, and why he is absent."

"Gentlemen, gentlemen! The time is passing, and it is time for business," impatiently exclaimed Mr. Hawkins.

"I think it would not be out of the way to call the meeting to order of our secretary yet online," remarked Mr. Thompson, "for I believe it is according to the rules," said the president.

"I do not think we could afford to break over, as I think Mr. Vinton would not approve of such a thing; that might have some bearing on our action at this meeting," returned Mr. Thompson, sharply. "Has any one, he asked: "Miss Harlan, can you tell us nothing more than you already have about Hugh Vinton's absence?"

"I can say that I can tell you nothing more of importance. He left the house yesterday morning, fortunately to go to the depot, and shortly after his departure he sent us word that he had been called to Trenton on business, and that he feared he would not return that night, but would go direct to the office here. I am positive of one thing; Mr. Vinton is not master of his own actions, or he would be here at this minute. I very much fear that there has been foul play somewhere."

"Foul play!" exclaimed Mr. Williams; "what do you mean by that? Who could have any motive for keeping Hugh Vinton from this meeting?"

"That, I propose to find out for yourself, Mr. Williams. You all know Mr. Vinton's policy with the men. You know he would vote at this meeting if he were here. I reason it out in this way: that there are persons present who would be opposed to his policy, and you will know that I am positive of one thing, and that is about his absence at this time."

Areta's arguments were getting a little nervous; in fact, a little fear was coupled with their utterance. Harold Spencer, however, of Areta, was basing her speech on positive knowledge or mere suspicions.

"Do you know the person who could be possessed of such a motive as you mention?" asked Mr. Williams in his quick fashion.

"I do not feel at liberty to accuse any person at this time; but you know it is an old saying, 'murder will out,' and it may possibly be true in this case. I feel very assured that he will yet make himself known."

"Miss Harlan, please allow me to say that your words are very mysterious, and that you wish to tell. Let me impress upon you the necessity of telling us anything that you may have in your mind."

"I told you, Mr. Williams, that I could accuse no person present. I might add a word that will aid in the discovery of the truth. Mr. Jasper Hawkins, president, as I have always been a lover of character study, I find that a flush, a blush, a nervous twitch, or a twitch of mouth will often betray the guilty party. I expect to see that evidence here in your midst. watch the faces closely; study every person's actions, and I feel confident as only possible, but probable."

Mr. Johnson leaned over the back of Mr. Thompson's chair and whispered: "I, for one, think that Miss Harlan is right. Let us adjourn and before this meeting is a thing of the past we will have a new president."

"Gentlemen," exclaimed the president; "we must get to work at once or we will be here until midnight. I want to state right here that the question most largely involved is the one of how to obtain the men. Are we going to recognize the demands of these worthless fellows who are howling 'union' at our heels, or are we going to proclaim our independence and let our mills and allow the strikers to get other work; or starve to death as they deserve to?"

"It seems to me you tried to secure outside help once or twice in the course of your remarks, Mr. Chairman," said Areta Harlan.

"By-the-way, Harlan, how does it come the mill isn't running now?"

"Oh, well—er—er you see I—I that is, I didn't have a fair chance. Before I could say a word to the new men, Jim Harrison got his say in' and the men left the mill."

"Do you think that they would have gone to work if you had been given a chance to get your 'say in' before they left?" asked Mr. Jackson.

"I am sure of it," replied Hawkins; "but

(Continued on page fourteen.)

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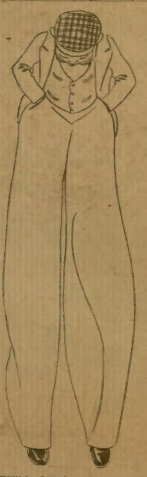

How Willie's first long trousers looked to Willie.

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Mother Goose in Sobs.

The black sheep was much perturbed.

"If you have three bags full of wool," they asked him, "why don't you continue to cry baa-baa?"

"Because," he answered, "my master is dead, the dame is going to put the whole family into full mourning, and the little girl that lives down the lane doesn't do a thing but beg for mutton every morning for breakfast!"

When Central Gave Up.

Dolly—Hello! Hello! Give me heaven! I want to say my prayers!

Went Too Far.

Jilted Lover—Why, why do you give me up, Marguerite? Do I not carry out your slightest wish? I would give up my last penny for you—my last crust of bread—I would run my very feet off to do your bidding.

Marguerite—That's just it. I cannot bring myself to marry a man who is so easily led.

She Could Learn.

"But I cannot engage you as a housekeeper when you tell me yourself that my friend across the street discharged you for eavesdropping."

"But the temptation was so great. You see, you don't know what it was I heard."

"On second thought I will employ you. Run and take off your hat."

Tommy—Pop, what is a bigamist?

Pa—A fool.

He—You acknowledge that you—er—like me, yet you refuse my offer?

She (belle of the season)—Yes, I must. Thirteen is an unlucky number.

He—Eh?

She—You are the thirteenth man who has proposed to me and if we should become engaged I'm afraid something dreadful would happen.

He—You are foolishly superstitious. What could happen?

She—I might marry you.

Expensive Economy.

"Madge, we can't afford new clothes this spring."

"Well, then, Albert, we must move. I don't mind wearing my old duds in a new neighborhood, but I won't stay here and wear them."

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Who Was She Thinking Of?

"Arbuthnot," she said, after they had started on their wedding journey, "I'm so glad you wear a beard."

"Why?" he asked.

"Oh," she replied, "it feels so uncomfortable to have one's cheek pressed against a day or two's growth of stubble."

Then she stopped suddenly and began to view the landscape from the car window.

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Two Uplifters.

"What," exclaimed the orator, "what two things are helping mankind to get up in the world?"

"The alarm clock and the stepladder," answered the dense person in the rear of the hall.

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Amenities of the Club.

Mrs. A.—Who on earth is Miss Jenkins in mourning for that she perpetually dresses in black?

Mrs. B.—Her husband.

Mrs. A.—Why, she never had any.

Mrs. B.—I mean the one she has sought for all her life and never found.

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Pure Reasoning.

He—I know you love me.

She—That is why I refuse to marry you.

He—I can't understand.

She—If you did not know that I love you it would be possible to live with you and be happy. As it is, I would become your slave.

Modern Matrimony.

He—Will you be mine?

She—Hardly that, Harry. Why can't we arrange it so that each of us will be ours?

This is how Mr. Softtop thought he'd feel when he proposed.

But this is how he felt when he

THE PERMANENT SNOW COMPOUND.

TALES OF YANKEE ENCHANTMENT.

By CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS.

BY CHARLES BATTELL LOOMIS.

"I'd as soon sell you my farm for two cents as to buy your compound," said Farmer Catlin to the black-haired and uncanny looking stranger. He had arrived just at nightfall at the close of a long winter's storm. The fields and trees and fences and roofs were white with snow and the two Catlin boys were delighted, but their father, with his knowledge of the work that it entailed would have been glad to see the snow take the same wings that had brought it and fly to the uttermost parts of the earth. And here was this fellow having the impudence to offer him a compound that would make snow permanent.

Mr. Catlin had let the man into the little hall with its winding stairway that led to the bed rooms above and now they stood talking while Bernard and Brainerd, his two sons, eagerly listened to the stranger's entrancing conversation.

"Why, I've sold quantities of it to fellers down in New York who are going to use it to make toboggan slides that'll last all summer."

"Well, people in the city may have time for such foolishness, but what in tarnation do you suppose I want my farm buried under three feet of snow the year around for? Summer season's short enough as 'tis."

"But, papa," said Bernard, "you wouldn't have to work so hard."

"And we'd live on the cream," s'pose. Snow pudd'n and ice cream," said the old man, sarcastically.

"And we could go sleigh ridin' when the weather was so warm that we'd wear just a shirt and trousers. Wouldn't that be dandy?" said Brainerd.

"Well, it's out of the question. I ain't gon'r to buy your compaound an' then' ain't no one so foolish in all Snouth Ardmore to do such a thing. Have much in it?"

"Only five dollars a quart and a quart will sprinkle an acre handsome which I donate a beautiful nickel-plated machine for distributing it."

"Say, young man," said Mr. Catlin, suddenly, "I think you're dealin' in unlawful goods, an' if they ain't they ought to be. S'pose you was to strike some mischievous feller that had a grudge ag'in big neighbor? He'd sprinkle his fields with it while he slep' an' 'twould be winter all the year raound on that farm. I don't question your bein' able to do it. Sense I see horse cars go alone I'm prepared for anythin', snow that'll be good to play croquet with next August."

"Won't they melt?" asked Brainerd.

"If you can melt 'em I'll give you my whole outfit."

A bonfire in the snow always appeals to a boy and they soon collected about a hundred cones from a tree near at hand. Then the stranger built a little pyramid of them, poured some kerosene oil on them from a tiny can that he carried in the pocket of his ulster and touching a match to it had a blaze in a few seconds.

The brick red head lighted up the snow and made it sparkle with a million diamonds, but the boys were too interested in watching the further processes of the stranger to notice the beauty of the scene. He took a little water sprinkler out of his other pocket and filled it with some of the powder. Then he dusted the snow with it for the space of a yard square.

"Now, make snow balls, boys, and put them into the fire."

The boys got to work and fashioned big, round snowballs, patting them into shape and hardening them by a pressure of the gloved hand. In a moment had been made the stranger said. "Now dump them in the fire."

The boys did so and were not at all surprised to see them resist the heat, for they had perfect confidence in the stranger. After they had been in the bed of coals for a minute the stranger pushed them out of the fire, and although they were somewhat smoked they were otherwise just as good as when put in.

"Now, you see that my compound does just what I claim for it. You'd better buy a quart. Haven't you any money laid by for a rainy day?"

"Yes," said both boys.

"Well, get it and perpetual snow instead. Much more fun. You can make a coasting place on some hill that no one ever cultivates."

"Blakely Hill," said both boys together."

So Bernard and Brainerd held back to the house to get five dollars out of their tin banks—he generally made his younger brother run errands for him—and while he was gone the fascinating stranger gave him a quart can of the compound with a little nickeled sprinkler and then when Brainerd came back he counted ten half dollars into the strangers hand.

"I think you boys are too good for this

When they saw motherly Mrs. Catlin.

but you don't sell me nothin' of the kind. Good night."

With a little sigh the man slung his bag over his back and left the house.

Mr. Catlin went out to the barn to bed down the cattle and the boys followed the stranger.

"Say, do you sell that in small quantities?" asked Bernard.

"Don't like to, but I can. You see a quart will last a life time, so you only have the first quart to buy. Talking for the wrong idea. I don't want to cover up his potato fields with snow the year round, but if he has a hill that he wants cultivating and sprinkles it with this powder you boys can coast all summer long and he can keep his milk and butter cool and comfortable without any need of ice."

"Wish we could see the thing work," said Bernard, with a sigh. "Such weather as this snow is going to stay anyway, but how do we know it would stay when it have come?"

"That's so," echoed Brainerd.

"Easily proved," said the stranger, with a smile. "I'll build a little fire here out of some cones if you boys 'll get 'em and I'll sprinkle a little of the powder on some earth." said the stranger, as he proceeded to go on his way.

"Why so?" asked Brainerd.

"Why, you seem so particular about only using it in places that ain't going to be cultivated. When I was a boy I would have sprinkled little patches here and there just for the fun of seeing heaps of snow in midsummer."

"Oh, that's bully," said Brainerd, laughing at the idea, and Bernard seemed to think there were possibilities in it, so after the stranger had gone off into the darkness they opened the can and poured some of the white powder into the little feeder and then they walked all around the house sprinkling it in a thin line. Then they sprinkled the gate posts and I am sorry to say the front path. The snow once hardened into place could not be kneaded off.

Then they got a lantern and set out for Blakely Hill, which was not far from the house, but which was three-quarters of a mile from the road, and never used for anything. On the way there they passed the church and whether by accident or design they dropped a lot in front of the church on a big drift, and if you go up to Ardmore next winter you can see that drift gleaming in the hot summer sun. Everyone has to drive around it, but it has brought lots of summer people to the place, so no one has ever complained.

Arrived at Blakely Hill they sprinkled a path ten feet wide for the whole length and that used up all their powder but a little bit, which they saved for future use.

Then they went home and went to bed so early that Mr. Catlin said to his wife: "I dunno's he'r' those boys got better's boys ter. I was always full of the ol' Harry when I was thatn age. Now I wouldn't have been contented ef he that man go off with his mis'able compound tonight if I'd been them. It's a curious farm with it."

"They're the best boys in the world, father," said Mrs. Catlin, and went up to their room to kiss them good night and tuck them in.

Boys are generally anxious to have snow remain, but in view of the queer things that were going to happen the Catlin boys wished hard for a thaw. But the weather held cold for two weeks and no one suspected that any snow had been chemically

(Continued on page fifteen.)

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In his desire to settle the matter the sultan is willing to do anything but pay.

An eastern publishing house announces "Our Presidents and How We Make Them." This is the first intimation we have had that Mark Hanna has become an author.

The decision in the Clark case will be interpreted by some practical politicians merely as a warning that a man must not pay too much for a legislature.

Undoubtedly most American men and women might profit greatly by pondering the suggestions offered by Mr. Eliot Gregory in the May issue of the Atlantic under the title "A Nation in a Hurry." The subject of Mr. Gregory's discussion is the tear and wear and nervous haste of American life and the purposeless expenditure of vitality and effort which it involves. This nervousness, which many observers are apt to regard as a sign of "enterprise" or "ambition," is one of the things which first impresses the traveler coming from foreign lands. The foreign passengers hardly escape the landing place ere they are made to feel the influence of the nervous tension. To them every one seems in a hurry. The business man bolts his lunch and rushes back to the office—where possibly he has an hour to spare; the passengers on the street cars take violent risks to catch the flying trolley; even the patrons of the theatre rise before the curtain has fallen and rush toward the doors lest they be a few seconds late in reaching the pavement.

That this is actually a distinctively American malady there are numerous witnesses to testify, and it might be well if rational Americans would sit down and devote some serious thought to the matter. One noteworthy feature of the trouble is that the victims of the hurry habit, as the psychologist William Janes has pointed out, do not actually progress any faster or go any farther than those who take things with comparative ease. They are simply wasting themselves to no purpose. Just what peculiar nervous influence there is in this country that makes it especially the home of the hurry habit is unknown. But certain it is that there are Americans who will rush madly through every meal, although they have nothing to do afterward, and who will run for the first car, although the next one will bring them home but fifteen seconds later.

It is significant that those who hurry most are those who are most likely to be always late; that those who rush fastest to finish their various allotted tasks are the ones who seem never to have any leisure at all. We have "Don't Worry" clubs. Why doesn't some one inaugurate a "Don't Hurry" club?

THE WAGES OF SATAN.

Mystery of a Maiden's Birth---The Counterfeiter's Scheme---A Detective's Skillful Defense of a Girl's Estate.

BY H. R. ROMANS.

Author of "Lured by Love," "Living a Lie," Etc.

(Copyrighted, 1900.)

Begun in No. 15, April 14. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back numbers can be procured from any of our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER IX.

"Since I have thought over the matter it occurs to me that Helen Louvre might cause us a great deal of trouble, unless we spring May's double on the society people," remarked Colonel Johnson to his wife some days after their return from Nice.

"Yes," replied Mrs. Johnson. "She might say things that would make the general public suspicious. Of course she does not know anything of our past, but a few words from her might start the authorities to investigating matters, and then we had claim to May's inheritance."

"The situation is serious in the extreme, and we must plan to evade the possible effects of anything she could say. Since she is unusually facile brain-respond with an idea."

"We might kidnap her. Anyway we keep her in prison until we have secured the money," suggested Mrs. Johnson.

"And then what would be done with her? Of course we could not let her go, and another would be the more vocal in the affair of the missing. If Jean Louvre is dead, I could fix it up so it would be quite comfortable, besides she would be right here where I could keep close watch. She would have to have that big negress from the farm to be her keeper, and in that way she would never know where she was; and when the affair was all over and we have the money she could be released. She would never suspect that it was us who had kept her a prisoner, and, of course, would have no idea why she had been kidnaped."

"When can we arrange to capture her?"

"One time is as good as another. She must be disturbed while she sleeps, for if we attempted it at any other time she might be more wary than who were her assailants."

"We will do it tonight."

"Very well; I will arrange the room for her reception and while I am doing that you can drive out to the farm and get the negress."

Mrs. Johnson's servants were chosen from those she knew she could trust. They were all negroes whom she and the Colonel had saved from the law at some time, and as they were paid well they served their master and mistress well and kept their mouths closed about any irregular occurrences that came to their knowledge of.

When the Colonel left for the plantation, Mrs. Johnson called to her side the servants and by her direction they carried a carpet into the room and laid it upon the bare floor. Then they put up a bed and placed tables, chairs and other furnishings in the room, being careful to see that the finally made ready for the reception and while I am doing that you can drive out to the farm and get the negress.

With a superhuman effort Frank wrenched himself loose, and ere his assailant could utter a cry of alarm the detective had him by the throat, and putting his entire strength in his grasp choked him to insensibility. Then he improvised a gag with his handkerchief and tying the man thoroughly with some light silk cord he carried in his pocket, he dragged him out of the way. Finding a closet under the stairway he stowed the still unconscious man into it and proceeded to explore the house.

The front room was furnished as a plain lawyer's office, and around the center table several men sat smoking and drinking. The detective found a chair in the hallway and standing on this he was able to reach the transom of the rear room. A small hole in the middle enabled him to see the occupants of the room. They were Colonel Johnson, and the man whom he concluded was Abel Skinner, the lawyer.

They conversed in low tones, and then the lawyer went to a desk by the wall, and after fumbling about for a while returned with a book which seemed to be of great interest to both. They were examining it and the lawyer read the latest entries when the detective heard footsteps and voices in the hallway. He leaped off the chair and the sleuth into a corner just in time to escape discovery. As the door of the front room opened and a ray of light shot into the dark hallway he caught a momentary glimpse of a girl of splendid stranger like May Johnson, enter the room with a companion.

Then came the sound of excited voices, a feminine laugh, and as the detective again returned to the transom he saw the girl and the man and woman enter the rear room and heard her introduced to Colonel Johnson as Daisy Rogers.

"I suppose Carl has told you why I wanted to see you, Abel, and be sott?" asked the Colonel.

"No," answered the woman, "he just said he had a friend who wanted to make a lady of me, and that there was big money in it. That caught me right off, you bet."

"Well, I want you to impersonate a young lady who was recently left penniless. You will be placed in charge of my wife——"

"But, say, interrupted the girl, "won't your wife object? Of course I am no Sunday school teacher and have been for my part but I can't stand it to be so close to your wife. She would tumble in a minute and if she was jealous, that's a knife in me."

"I think you misunderstand. You are to impersonate a girl who is supposed to be my daughter. We intend to give her a fortune. She has disappeared and we cannot get the police to work quietly. You——"

"Oh, that's the lay, is it? But won't she come in and make trouble?"

"No, she doesn't know she is an heiress."

"Well, I'm with you, if I get enough of the stuff."

"You will be liberally provided for, and if you will do as I say and follow instructions of my wife, and drop your slang, you may have a chance to shine in the best society of the city."

"Oh, say, this is fine! I wonder what the rest of the push would do if they knew?"

"They must never know. Henceforth you are dead to them, as it would be fatal to our scheme for outsiders to learn of it. I will take you home with me now."

The detective had been so interested in this conversation that he had not noticed the noise that was transpiring in the front room.

When important doings were going on in the rooms of the lawyer a guard was always stationed at the door below, and when any one of the band entered he must give a countersign or identify himself before he would be allowed to ascend the stairs.

The fact that Carl Harris had not been challenged when he entered with Daisy Rogers had been noticed by them until in conversing with his associates he learned that Jake Hawkston was acting as guard.

"What's up is not then when I entered," exclaimed Carl.

"There's something wrong, then," suggested one of the men. "Jake would never leave his post until he was relieved. Come on, fellows, we must investigate."

Several of them started up as the man threw open the door. Too late the detective saw them coming; ere he could jump from the chair he was grasped by several strong hands, and then ensued a struggle of the most desperate kind, that could only be one way. The detective was overpowered, his weapons taken from him and he was bound and taken into the presence of the Colonel, who sat trembling in the rear room.

"Great heavens, men!" he exclaimed. "It is the same detective I ordered put out of the way at Dick's some time ago. How came he to be here? Answer me," he demanded as those about him remained silent.

"We picked him out into the jaws of an alligator," remarked Sam Dawson. "I can't imagine how he escaped. He must bear a charmed life."

"Didn't you shoot him first?" asked the Colonel.

"No; we thought it would be better to allow the alligator to tear him to pieces while yet alive.

"We must take no more risks. Our band has been successful so long that I fear some of you are getting careless. This man must die right here. Shoot me boy eyes. We are about to make the coup of our lives, and he must not be here to thwart us. Take your revolver, Sam, and put a bullet through him."

Sam advanced to execute the command, when the lawyer advanced.

"Allow me to remark, Colonel, that a revolver would make a little more noise than is absolutely necessary. Let me suggest that a sharp knife be inserted into his anatomy just below the fifth rib."

"Quite true, Abel," answered the Colonel. "Use your knife, Sam, and let's end this affair quickly."

The counsellor unbuttoned the detective's jacket and carefully felt for the place to insert the knife into the wildly beating heart of the doomed man.

CHAPTER X.

[illegible] Shepard sent the fisherman to [illegible] probate court to get a license to marry [illegible] Johnson he did not know that the day [illegible] Colonel Johnson and his wife had [illegible] the city of Mobile inside out in their efforts to find the fugitive girl. The marriage license clerk had received word not to grant a license to any one wanting to marry a girl by that name, so the Colonel's plan to keep May's companion from marrying her reacted in a way that had never occurred to him.

The fisherman returned to his shack by the seashore and informed Shepard that the clerk had refused to issue the license.

"What reason did he give?" asked Shepard.

"Said he had orders not to issue papers to anyone bearing the name of May Johnson."

"I cannot imagine what it means" mused Shepard, "but I know where there is a license that is awaiting me and an officer ready and willing to perform the ceremony."

"We are going to New Orleans," he said, a few moments later to May. "Someone has spoiled my chances of marrying you here, but once we reach your father's plantation the ceremony will be performed without delay. If you refuse to return with me quietly and without making any attempt to escape, I will lock you up here while I go to the city and will not return to the end of your days. If you promise me by your honor to make no outcry or appeal to the passengers, we will return to New Orleans and be legally married. You may have your choice."

May was but one thing for the innocent girl to do. He had not attempted to disguise his evil designs if she refused to do his bidding in the least and he seemed to be sincere in returning to New Orleans, hoping that something might intervene to save her ere she was forever bound to him in marriage.

They walked from the sea shore to the nearest street car line, and as the course was hurrying them toward the Crescent City. May soon started in her delight who had been left on the raft and in the gulf. She observed that the boat was small, and many times she wished she was by his side on the raft during the long night.

But George Moon was not dead; he was very much in evidence in Mobile, as Jack Sargent would have found had he not forgotten out of the city so opportunely.

The time for the steamer to board a train

THE FALLWORTH PLOT.

Fred Bentley's Strange Discovery---How a Villain Was Foiled---A Man's Queer Disappearance.

By FRANK HONEYWELL.

(Copyright, 1900.)

Begun In No. 16, May 5. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back numbers can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER V.
A STIRRING SCENE.

"Well, this is a—a fine kettle of fish," muttered Fred, as he viewed the highly dramatic scene below. "Am I dreaming or out of my head? I'd like to bump pate against the wall good and hard to find out, but I don't dare. I guess the whole thing's real enough.

Many a boy would have wished for a camera in such a position, at least for the sake of the humor of the thing, if not for the practical utility; but Fred was only a country boy who knew little about photography, and, besides, he was too much bewildered to think anything other than the gravest thoughts.

Mr. and Mrs. Guntler were dumb-founded, practically unable to speak or act; but Mr. Thompson showed the activity of his own wits and muscle by seizing him by both shoulders and drawing him bodily into the room. As soon as he was free the boy scrambled to his feet and brushed before the visitor in a half-frightened, bewildered way. Mr. Thompson shut the door again and then turned about and faced the offspring of Mr. and Mrs. Guntler.

"Well, sir, what have you got to say for yourself? Don't you know enough to keep your nose out of other people's business?"

But Mrs. Guntler held an affection for her son somewhat similar to that of a lioness for her cub, and she did not purpose to see her only boy abused.

"Say, mister, I say, you look out how you're handling my Jim," she exclaimed, confronting Mr. Thompson with clenched fists. "He had no right to listen to us, but me and my old man are the ones to tend to him for that."

"Hush," said Thompson, with a sneer.

"The woman's right," agreed Mr. Guntler. "Jim knows considerable and we might as well let him into all our secrets. I guess he can keep mum, and maybe we'll need his help before the whole thing's settled." And Guntler tried to look proudly at his son.

Thompson looked with evident disgust at Guntler's hopeful, which only tried to catch a ray of approval from Thompson's eye.

"How much do you know, boy?" said the visitor.

"A hull lot," replied Jim. "This ain't the first time I've overheard."

"It isn't, eh?" said Thompson. "Well, how much have you ever told to anyone and to whom?"

"Nothing," said Jim. "I didn't want Fred to know anything about it, 'cause it'd help him too much. I hated him, so I kept everything close as a trap."

Thompson looked relieved and regarded Jim less sternly.

"I guess you're all right," he said. "But remember that you have a still tongue in your head, for if you don't, it'll go hard with you. Now if we let you into our counsel, will you promise to do anything we tell you to do?"

"Sure," said Jim, "you can count on me every time."

"Well, I hope so," said Thompson, a little doubtfully, however. "Now, tell me, is Fred in his room yet?"

"Of course," replied Jim. "I've been in the kitchen quite a while and he couldn't have come down without me knowing it. There's no way for him to get out of his room except through kitchen."

"Or the window," suggested Thompson.

"What good would that do him?" asked Jim. "He couldn't hear anything from out there."

"Anyway," said Thompson. "I want you to climb up into his room and see if he's in bed."

Jim began to tremble visibly, and Fred, in spite of the increasing danger of the situation, found a spare moment in which to wonder why Jim was so terrified.

"I always knew that Jim was a coward," said the boy overhead to himself, "but I didn't know he was so much afraid of me as all of that. I haven't given him a licking since we were fifteen years old, though that was a sound one. Gracious! I do hope he doesn't find courage to go up into my room, for that would spoil everything. If I only had time, I'd get back there until Jim finished his inspection. But I haven't time, and if they find me, I'll just have to fight my own way as best I can and with anything I can lay hands on."

"Well," said Thompson at last as Jim made no move to obey his order; "are you going?"

Mrs. Guntler started to interfere again, but Thompson interrupted her:

"See here, my good lady," he said; "didn't your son promise to do anything he was told to do if we let him into our council?"

"Yes," admitted Mrs. Guntler, not remembering the exact wording of the proviso.

"Then let him do it. It will be necessary to be on the safe side in this matter and your son is about the only one who has reason to suspect anything to excite suspicion."

"You better go, Jim," said Mrs. Guntler. Jim hesitated a few moments longer, then an idea seemed to spring suddenly into his head, and he said:

"Ah right. That's the way I like to hear you talk," approved Mr. Thompson. "Of course, if he's awake and knows we know what you're after, you can tell him you want to borrow his jackknife or something of the kind."

"I'll fix it all right," said Jim; and with these words of assurance he opened the kitchen door, passed out of the room, and closed the door after him.

Fred concluded that he was as good as in a tight box, but he set his teeth firmly and determined to fight it out to the end if discovered, as seemed sure to be the event. He wondered what had so suddenly changed Jim's attitude, but had no time to form a conclusion before the inspector returned.

"Well?" asked Thompson.

"He's all right," said Jim, glibly. "He's sleepin' like a b——"

"Good," said Thompson. "I guess he can't be so very suspicious after all."

"You got what you're after, then?" asked Mrs. Guntler.

"Oh, I hardly think so," said Thompson. "But surely we couldn't be so soft asleep now if he knew as much as such a thing must signify."

"No, I suppose not," was the reply. "But, anyway, I'm glad it's over. Come, on Joe."

Mrs. Guntler, her husband, and her son filed out of the room, leaving Mr. Thompson alone, who, for personal reasons, chose not to follow. Fred now had a little time to do as some one had suggested in his mind, and you may be sure that his mind worked very fast.

"Jim, the young rascal, didn't go up to my room at all, and I'm sure I've opened the door when he be, and the better for me for the once. And Thompson—he's playing a smooth game, I must say. I've been puzzled a good deal at his way of acting in regard to Jim, but now I see what he's up to now. He wants to free himself from all suspicion, and what better way than to make Mrs. Guntler think I took them. So I'm a rich man's son, heir to fortune, am I? Well, I can't say I'm sorry, but there'll be exciting times before I step into my rightful shoes, or I'm badly mistaken.

Yes, the exciting times were coming and coming soon. Indeed, they were already at hand, and were simply destined not to stop right away. Mr. and Mrs. Guntler and Jim in scowling silence, of course, had gone through the kitchen, but by way of a door which opened directly from the sitting room into their own private apartment. When they returned, they came by the same way, but not in the same manner. Jim bore a frightened look; Mrs. Guntler had both hands in her hair and looked as if she would tear it out by the roots; but Mr. Guntler was the worst terror. His fists were clenched, his eyes were wild and staring out of their sockets, his hair, which had been left grow long, was all in disorder, and he looked more like an escaped lunatic than anything else.

"They're gone, they're gone!" he said, with a hoarse, half-stifled scream. "And he done it, I know. Oh, I'll kill him! I'll kill him! To think of this and then what he did to me in the stable tonight! Oh, let me get at him!"

And with these wild words the enraged man made a rush for the kitchen door with the evident intention of breaking into Fred's room and carrying out his fearful threat

CHAPTER VI.
MR. THOMPSON TAKES HIS DEPARTURE AND——

Mr. Guntler was certainly in dead earnest, and had not Mr. Thompson been too quick for him, he surely must soon have been in the kitchen, and dying for Fred's room. But the visitor barred the way by putting his back to the door and placing a strong hand on the enraged man's shoulder.

"Let go of me," growled Guntler, fairly gnashing his teeth. "This is my house, and I'll do as I please here."

"Mr. Guntler," said Thompson, growing very pale and yet determined, "you certainly must listen to reason. You'll do a world of damage if you try such a thing, to say nothing of the fact that you might have your hands full, and, I warn you, you won't get any help from me. Just be quiet, if you please. There's been enough noise in this house tonight already to bring him out of his room a dozen times. I assure you that you'll not find him asleep, but as wide-awake a fighting cock as one would care to meet. Please to calm yourself now, and I'll pay you your two hundred dollars and we'll all go to bed."

The prospect of soon having so much money in his possession—for Mr. Guntler was not a wealthy man, his hundred-acre farm being heavily mortgaged—was the prime persuasive power which quieted the man, and with a half-eager, half-dissatisfied grunt, he stepped back, while Mr. Thompson produced a wallet from his inner coat pocket and proceeded to count out the bills.

Presently he handed a bunch to Guntler, who took them and counted them carefully, then put them away into his own well-worn purse. Jim gazed at the money covetously as long as it was in view, a fact which did not escape the observation of either Fred or Mr. Thompson, though Mr. and Mrs. Guntler's eyes were all on the money and paid little attention to the eager gaze of their son.

"Now," said Thompson, "is everything settled for the night, and may we all go to bed?"

"I guess so," replied Guntler by no means heartily. "But if the kid has got the relics he can go to work and push his claims, and you and I'll be souped as sure as ginger."

"How'll he know where to go?" asked Thompson.

"Humph!" said Guntler. "I guess that'll be easy enough to know, when his mother's picture and his own are in the case of the watch and his own name and place of birth are engraved on the outside."

"You don't say!" exclaimed Thompson, who had failed to notice this fact when he saw the watch on the night before.

"I should say I do," replied Guntler, "and what's more, the kid'll have to be overpowered and hid away in some place until you get hold of the money, and that place mustn't be in this house, nor will I have anything to do with the affair unless it is some part that shall be entirely known to Fred Bentley himself."

Mr. Thompson was surprised. He had not given Guntler credit of possessing any such strategic qualities, and knew that the man, who had recently shown such an abandon to recklessness and lack of craft, was not going to prove so ready a tool as he had before thought him to be.

"Well," he said, a little uneasily, "we'll go to bed now, and talk over the matter in the morning. Perhaps by that time some one of us can suggest something that will help us out of the difficulty."

In acquiescence of his move Mrs. Guntler

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WE HAVE NO CONDITIONS OR RESTRICTIONS. Many of our work on solving puzzles. Every one who sends a correct answer will receive a handsome present. Even if you do not want the prize awarded you, you can sell it and realize cash. We want to introduce our magazine into every home in the United States, which alone we expect to do with the aid of our many friends. Therefore, to interest new readers in our magazine as much as possible, we have decided to give away a number of valuable premiums. Every answer received will be credited with its proper value in premiums, and every one of them will be guaranteed to be worth the money. Besides, a number of brain teasers will be appreciated, we decided to appropriate this small sum for the benefit of our readers. Every one who sends a correct answer will receive a handsome present, and a number of cash prizes will be awarded to the successful contestants.

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BOYCE'S MONTHLY, Boyce Building, - Chicago

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proceeded to make the stove snug and safe for the night, while the rest of the cabaliers filed out into the kitchen. After Mrs. Guntier had left the sitting room, Fred remained quiet in the apartment overhead for fully an hour before he dared to venture into the hallway. Then he succeeded in reaching his own room over the kitchen in safety, where he began to rummage about, selecting an article of clothing here and an article there, until he had gathered together and done up a bundle, which, in view of the present circumstances, had a very suggestive appearance. This task completed, he sat down on the edge of his couch and began to muse and to study over what his next move ought to be.

"Shall I go now?" he questioned himself, pressing his hand hard over his brow and resting his elbow on his knee in an attitude of perplexed indecision, "or shall I wait and play the innocent for a while in the hope of learning more? I don't know; it's a hard question to answer, but—well—let me see. If I light out tonight they'll suspect pretty strongly that I've overheard their conversation and so head the following up the clew. No, I'd better stay and tell Mr. Guntier—I'm mighty glad now that I never got in the way of calling him uncle—yes, tell him right to his face that I'm not satisfied here any longer and think I'll clear out. I'll just put my bundle into this chest—can't call it a trunk very well, since I made it myself—so that it won't be likely to be stumbled over and so give away my plan, and wait at least until Thompson leaves the place. Then, well, I guess I'll be pretty likely to follow not very far behind."

Having decided thus, Fred quickly got ready for bed and was soon doing his best to go to sleep on a pretty hard couch. But a hard bed is one to be had for one who is used to it, and not more than twenty minutes had elapsed before the hero of this tale was actually in dreamland. Nothing further occurred to disturb his night's rest and he arose in the morning, greatly refreshed, although deeply under the impression that he had been reading an exceedingly thrilling and sensational novel which had given a devilish grip on his imagination and would not let go its hold.

Fred was left pretty much to himself next morning, for, as well aware of the peculiar, sullen clouds in the social atmosphere about the breakfast table were over and the chores done, he went into the corn field to work, feeling well that he would only arouse suspicion by hanging around the house, and feeling that he must use all the skill at his within his power. On returning to the house at noon he did not perceive the least sunshine or any disappointment in the fact that Thompson had left, but, nevertheless he was not to be entirely definite by on his next move. He determined that he himself would be somewhere after dinner and was all prepared and on the point of making the announcement to the family when something unexpected, though it had already been hinted at, occurred.

Mr. Guntier had apparently paid close attention to his eating all through the meal, never raising a word or looking at any one. No doubt he was trying to work his ruffled spirit into one of seeming humility, as the event tended to prove; but just as Fred was about to state his intention of leaving home, the head of the household opened his mouth, not to take a bite of corn bread, but to speak.

"Fred!"

Fred looked at Mr. Guntier, wondering what was coming, but said nothing.

Mr. Guntier cleared his throat before speaking further. Then he continued with a stammer or two, probably affected, possibly not.

"A-hem, a-Fred, I have something to say to you."

"I am listening," said Fred.

"Of course, sir, of course, my s—Fred, to be sure. The fact is, s—I have something very important to communicate to you."

Fred's curiosity and wonder increased. He knew Mr. Guntier too well to think for a moment that the man was going to tell him anything to his advantage.

"Well," said Fred, in an evenly suspended tone of voice.

"You see," said Guntier, "you and I have never treated each other very well. I think each one of us owes the other several apologies."

"Oh," said Fred, taking this speech as a pretty strong indication of what was coming.

"I admit," continued Guntier, "that I acted pretty rough last evening in the stable, but you gave me a rough return, which even my masters pretty well, so if you'll call everything quits between us and shake hands with me, I'll promise for my own part that there'll be no more disagreement between us. You're a good boy and a good worker, and I don't see very well how I'd get along without you."

With these words Mr. Guntier extended his arm across the dinner table toward Fred, but the latter ignored the move.

"What's the matter, Fred?" said the quasi-penitent man, "you don't feel so badly hurt as all o' that, do you, especially since you got the best of me? You ought to be generous and shake hands with me."

"Yes," urged Mrs. Guntier, "shake hands with your uncle, Fred, he wants to do what's right with you. We had a long talk over the matter last night and came to the conclusion that we were all too hard on you."

"That's right," said Jim, as he sipped his coffee, "you'd better make up."

Lou and Lizzie, being entirely ignorant of the affair and innocent of any complicity with the deep plot at hand, looked on in amazement, while Fred sat in silence, wondering just what he ought to do and say on the moment. At length, however, he came to a conclusion.

"Just hold your hand there for a moment or two while I make a visit to my room, and possibly may take it," he said, as he arose quickly from his chair and proceeded to carry out the proposed action.

Mr. Guntier was dumbfounded. This was a cool kind of impudence which took all the potential energy out of him, so to speak. Fred was out in his room before the man had half recovered, and his task of throwing his bundle of clothes out of the stick window was soon accomplished, and he himself had returned to the room below almost before Mr. Guntier had resumed his seat at the table.

"Hi, there!" he exclaimed, staggering from his chair, for he had seen Fred's bundle light on the ground and half guessed its meaning. "What do you mean? What are you up to now?"

"My dear people," returned Fred, with a contemptuous smile, as he laid his hand on the door-knob, "I am very sorry, indeed, to be forced to refuse your kind offer of reconciliation and friendship, but at this point we must part company and from now on will fight our battles in different parts of the world. Good-by."

So speaking, Fred opened the door to pass outside, but he did not give Mr. Guntier credit of being so quick in the twinkling of an eye, it seemed, the farmer made a spring like that of a wild beast and landed upon the boy with such force as almost to bear him to the floor.

Another installment of this interesting story for boys and girls will appear next week. Ledger readers are requested to send premium offers on pages thirteen and fifteen.

A Lazy Man's Scheme.

"There's a man who has twenty clever fellows working for him. They give him their brain power and yet none of them has ever secured a dollar for it."

It was 2 o'clock in a down town restaurant, and the speaker nodded toward a small, dark man who sat at a table a few feet away. The little man is a writer of short stories of a thrilling and dramatic character. He is as prolific a writer as Old Sleuth, and produces twenty-four yearly by his pen. He lives at a hotel down town, and while he has no connection with the newspapers his hours are those of a reporter on a morning journal. Twelve o'clock at night finds him one of the newspaper offices or at the rooms of the Press club in friendly chat with a bunch of "all nighters."

He writes his melodramatic stories up to a crisis, lays down his pen and walks over to a city room where a dozen reporters are throwing the best of their writing into the copy basket. Everybody soon begins to spin yarns.

"Curious thing came under my notice a few days ago," begins the writer of melodramatic tales. He sketches the plot of his unfinished story up to the difficult point which has stopped him. "Now, what do you suppose happened next?" he philosophizes, flicking the ashes from the end of his cigar.

"I'll bet so and so," shouts one of the boys.

"Pshaw! That's not likely," interposes a second. "People under such circumstances would have—" and he finishes the story.

In fifteen minutes the romancer has half a dozen plausible sequels suggested to him. He makes a mental note of them, strolls out and over to his hotel with the rest of his materials ready made without effort on his part.

"Is that man a vampire or a genius?"

"Neither one; a clever, lazy man."

Wouldn't Introduce Him.

A young man with a beetling brow and a nice new necktie entered a law office in one of the big down town office buildings and inquired for a member of the firm, a Mr. Younger, whose name he pronounced with strict regard for the rule of orthoepy.

"Is Mr. Young-er in?" he asked of the young woman stenographer, with whom he seemed to be acquainted.

"You mean Mr. Youn-ger?" she replied, pronouncing the "g" hard.

"Can it be he pronounces it that way?" asked the caller, feigning surprise. "Of course it's his privilege to pronounce it as he chooses, but no one else I ever heard pronouncing names. But you know Y-o-u-n-g-e-r doesn't spell Younger, but Younger."

"No, I didn't know it," she answered, as one who doesn't care. "But here he comes now. That's him going into his private office."

"Excuse me, but that's not him."

"No? Pray, who is it, then?"

"It's he."

They stared at each other for ten seconds and then the young man said:

"Will you introduce me to Mr. Younger?"

"No, she retorted. "Since you seem to know so much more about him than I do, I think you'd better introduce me."

There was an ominous click in the rattle of the typewriter as the young man entered the private office and presented his card.

A Slash at His Beard.

He—Miss Simpson, I'm a self-made man.
She—Yes? Well, why didn't you study the fashion plates in regard to whiskers?

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CHICAGO LEDGER, BOYCE BUILDING, CHICAGO

A Battle for Justice.

(Continued from page seven.)

as I was going to say when interrupted, I——

"Never mind what you were going to say just yet, but don't you think Harrison must have used some very forcible argument to make these men turn back after they got here?"

"I suppose he did," admitted Mr. Hawkins.

"Do you think if another crowd came on to go to work that Harrison could make them turn back?"

"I don't think he could; I am sure not if I could get a word with them, but as I have been trying to get a chance to do you for the last half hour, I, for one, will stand firmly to uphold our rights; to show these rascals who are running these works, man or master."

"It seems to me," murmured Ezra Wilson, "that Vinton's absence would please the president as well as any person I can think of, for their ideas of unionism seem to me run in very different channels."

Low as were the words of Mr. Wilson they reached the ears of Jasper Hawkins, whose face flushed with anger as he asked: "Do you mean to insinuate——"

"I mean to insinuate nothing, Mr. Hawkins," quietly interrupted Mr. Wilson; "I was merely expressing my opinion to my neighbor here, and your hearing must be very acute or you could not have heard what I said; but perhaps you were following Miss Harlan's advice and studying my face, and simply read my thoughts; and if that was the case I was mistaken when I supposed that you had overheard my words."

This shot of Mr. Wilson's hit the mark, for Hawkins moved as uneasily as if his chair cushion contained pins and needles instead of goose feathers.

"Mr. Wilson," bellowed the angry functionary, "I resent such insults as you are heaping upon me, and as chairman of this meeting, I will exercise my authority and have you ejected from the room if you persist in such unbecoming actions."

"If I promise to vote to put down the laboring man and trample him under my feet, you will allow me to stay, won't you; or will you allow me to vote before I go."

At this last taunt the president could hardly contain himself. He fairly snorted in his rage. The tables seemed to be on the turn; and he began to see his chances of reelection fade. Whatever Mr. Wilson's motive might be, he was certainly showing the president in his true colors a little too plainly for that individual's peace of mind.

Through it all Harold Spencer sat like a dumb mute, for he knew that he had already said too much for his own good.

At last after a large amount of wrangling the vote was called for.

Another installment of this fascinating story will appear next week. Look readers are respectfully asked to note our premium announcements on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Wages of Satan.

(Continued from page eleven.)

Hesitating not a moment he followed the conductor, and climbing upon the swaying box cars, ran forward toward the front of the train. The wheels of the engine screamed under the tightened brakes, set tighter than ever by scared brakemen, who felt more like jumping than trying to save the train. It came to a halt but a few feet from the wreck and the crew went forward and gazed open-mouthed at the appalling sight.

"Well," said the conductor, "it's a bad one, and the thing for us to do is to buck up to the last station and send for help."

George Moore stood stupefied for a moment. The shrieks of the dying and injured was an awful sound to the human ear, but as he gazed upon the scene of wreckage wondering if he would be able to find May's body, he saw a tongue of flame leap up, and touching the side of a varnished car, it spread like as if the car encountered powder.

With a cry of alarm George sprang down the side of the bank and began combatting the fire, while above and below him he could see their agonized faces of the imprisoned passengers who read their doom in the flames that it seemed impossible to check.

This dramatic and thrilling story will be continued next week. Anyone desiring to subscribe for the Ledger is respectfully referred to our advertisement of free canvas and free patterns on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Fighting the Trust.

Our readers will no doubt remember how two lines of steamboats or two lines of railroads occasionally enter into a fight and reduce the rates and in some cases give away absolutely free to advertise their roads. One of the largest concerns in Chicago is fighting the trust and in order to advertise their goods are giving away thousands of handsome presents absolutely free. These presents consist of jewelry, hosiery, furnishing goods, books, silverware, toys, musical ornaments, pictures, cutlery, glassware, etc. Every reader of this paper is entitled to their choice of 120 valuable presents free according to the offer of W. F. McLaughlin & Co., Dept. A, Chicago, Ill. While this fight is on we suggest that every reader of this paper write to them asking them to send their list of 120 valuable presents and illustrations. Don't fail to take advantage of this golden opportunity. Write them today. They don't ask you to sell anything nor will they sell the presents. They are giving them away as an advertisement. This offer will not appear again, therefore write today.

No Occasion for Extremes.

Editor—If you come here again I'll chuck you out of the window.

Poet—What's the matter with the door?

The spring cleaning is a recognition of the fact that dust and dirt accumulate in the house during the long winter months. The house appears to be clean. There is no dirt visible. But the housewife knows that lack of air and sunlight in closed rooms means an accumulation of dust and dirt. She knows more than this: She knows that the presence of such accumulations offers a harborage to disease germs.

The body is a house. Through the long winter months it is closely shut in by heavy clothing. It lacks sunlight and fresh air. It is weakened by living in an overheated and foul atmosphere. It accumulates a certain clogging refuse from the heavy foods necessary to winter warmth. For this reason the body needs its own spring cleaning. The languor and weariness, the tired and "played-out" feelings which are so commonly associated with the spring season are the evidences of a sluggish and impure condition of the blood. More than all else, this impure condition of the blood offers a prepared breeding ground for disease, and greatly increases the liability to serious maladies.

Everybody recognizes the need of a blood cleansing remedy in the spring. The mistake made by many people is to use some alcoholic medicine, which overcomes that "tired feeling" simply by keeping the body stimulated. These so-called medicines are of no real benefit, and do not cleanse the blood.

The first thing to be noted of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery is that it contains no alcohol, neither opium, cocaine, nor any other narcotic. The results that follow its use are real and permanent, not the superficial results of stimulation. It entirely eliminates from the blood the poisons which feed and breed disease. The result is that it cures eruptions, pimples, blotches, scrofula, salt rheum, rheumatism, and other forms of disease which originate in impure blood.

The tonic effect of "Golden Medical Discovery" is remarkable. It not only cleanses the blood of impurities, but it enriches it, and increases its flow by increasing the activity of the blood-making glands. There is a great deal of talk about "blood-making medicines." But it is only talk. No medicine can make a drop of blood. Blood is made from food, after it has been properly digested and assimilated. "The blood is the life," but if the body is not fed the life current fails. The blood is life only while the body is properly fed and nourished. It is the recognition of these fundamental physiological facts in the preparation of "Golden Medical Discovery" to which may be attributed in no small degree its wide range of remarkable cures. The blood supply is reduced and its quality impaired whenever there is disease of the stomach and its associated organs of digestion and nutrition. By curing diseases of the stomach and other organs of digestion and nutrition, "Golden Medical Discovery" enables the perfect digestion and assimilation of food which is converted into nutrition, and in the form of pure blood strengthens every organ of the body. It makes new blood and new blood is new life.

New Blood and New Life.

"I must again send a few lines to you to let you know how I am getting along since taking the wonderful medicine which cured me two years ago," writes Miss Bertha Ebeler, of 1416 Benton St., St. Louis, Mo. "I still continue in very good health, and think there is not a better medicine on earth than Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery.

"It is the best thing for nervousness, and for a weak, run-down condition, that anybody could want. I was very nervous and weak last summer. I took five bottles of Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery, and it just made me feel like a new person. It gives a person new life and new blood. I can now work all day long without feeling the least bit tired. In fact, I feel like a new person."

Eczema from Head to Foot.

"I was troubled with eczema from the crown of my head to the soles of my feet," writes Mrs. Ella Quick, of Cass City, Tuscola Co., Mich. "Could not walk at times, nor wear my shoes. Thought there was no help for me—at least the doctor said there was none. I went to see friends at Christmas time and there heard of the good that Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery had done, and was advised to try it at once.

"I had been getting worse all the time. I took thirteen bottles of the 'Golden Medical Discovery' and ten vials of Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets, and used the 'All-Healing Salve,' which made a complete cure. It was slow, but sure. I was taking the medicines about eight months."

Bad Blood Purified.

"I feel it my duty to write to you of the wonderful curative powers of your 'Golden Medical Discovery,'" writes George S. Henderson, Esq., of Denaud, Lee Co., Florida. "I had a sore on my right ear, and my blood was badly out of order. I tried local doctors, but with no good results. Finally, I wrote you the particulars in my case, and you advised your 'Golden Medical Discovery,' which I began to take. From the first bottle I began to feel better, and when I had taken eight bottles the sore had healed up. I wish you success."

Mrs. Ella Schall, of Whitehaven, Luzerne Co., Pa., writes: "Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery cured me in one month, sound and well. You remember my case was abscess of the breast. We had spent lots of money."

TWENTY-ONE CENTS, *in one-cent stamps, will pay expense of mailing Dr. Pierce's Common Sense Medical Adviser, 1008 large pages, paper covers. The stamps cover the expense of mailing ONLY. The book is a gift.*

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The Permanent Snow Compound.

(Continued from page nine.)

hardened. The boys built several bonfires on Blakely Hill to test it and it didn't melt a bit.

They hinted to their schoolfellows that when a thaw came there'd be more fun than a goat up at their house and at Blakely Hill, but beyond that they would say nothing.

At last, toward the end of January, there came a warm rain, and snow in the vicinity of South Ardmore vanished like maple syrup and buckwheat cakes.

The boys heard the patter of the rain on the tin roof and they hugged themselves and chuckled. In the morning they were up as soon as it was light. The rain had stopped, but it was very warm. The mercury registered 52 on the front porch. They dressed and went out of doors in the morning twilight. Bare ground everywhere. Bare ground as far as they could see, except that on the front path there was three feet of snow packed hard, and all around the house a drift and two picturesque heaps on the gate posts, and under one of the pine trees a pile of ashes and half burned coals and twelve snowballs.

Mr. Catlin was disposed to be angry when he saw what had happened, but good Mrs. Catlin reminded him that boys would be boys and that they might have covered up his winter wheat.

"Well, it does beat all," he said at last, and when he heard about the coasting at Blakely Hill he grinned like a boy and said: "Mother, what say we all go over there and renew sour youth?"

Mrs. Catlin would never grow old. She was always ready for anything, so a merry family party, including the hired girl and the hired man, set out for the hill, drawing in their wake the boys' big bobsled.

Of course, lots of people saw them going up the road pulling the sled over the bare ground and many thought them crazy, but when a few minutes later they heard shrill cries of glee from Mrs. Catlin and the girl and the deep bass laughter of the men and the shouts and chuckles of the boys, they ran out to see what was the matter.

And when they saw motherly Mrs. Catlin, her hair streaming in the wind, steering the bobsled down Blakely Hill on an eminence of hard snow, while all around the grass was fresh and green, owing to its winter blanket just removed, they came out, too, young and old, bringing sleds and trays and anything on which they could coast.

And from that time until people got tired of the sport, which wasn't until late in September, that hill was alive with coasting parties when the mercury was up in the hundreds and stored ice melted like heated butter.

But the pathway of three foot snow in the Catlins front yard was a good deal of an eyesore to the old people, and at last they covered it with dirt and planted grass seed on it and named their place "The Embankment," and took summer boarders on the strength of it, and now Mr. Catlin blesses the day the stranger sold the boys the wonderful compound.

"Dear me, I must be getting old."

"What makes you think so?"

"People have been congratulating me on holding my own."

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The patterns shown below are furnished us by one of the best, if not the best, pattern manufacturers in New York. They comprise the very latest styles, and are unequalled for accuracy in fit, simplicity in use, and are most economical of material. They sell from the stores from twenty-five to fifty cents each. Full instructions are printed on every pattern. Three months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 25 cents and any TWO of these patterns FREE. Six months' subscription to the CHICAGO LEDGER for 50 cents and FIVE of these patterns FREE. This offer is without an equal. If you are wise you will take advantage of it at once. Give the numbers of the patterns and bust measure desired. Enclose money and address,

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32, 34, 36, 38, 40, 42 inch bust.

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"Case No. 130. Age, 37; married; proprietor Steel Works, Rouen, France; 5 ft. 7½ in.; weight when treatment began, 130 lbs.; at end of treatment, 5 months, eight pounds; after treatment, 170 lbs."

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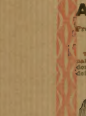

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES.

Ten Fairies.

Mamma has been telling Dorothy a pretty story about a friendly fairy, who always came just at the right moment to help a little girl in her work or play.

Dorothy thought about the story very hard for a few minutes, and then she looked up into her mamma's face and said:

"I wish I had a little fairy like that, mamma, to help me."

"All little girls have fairies to help them, Dolly."

"Is it another story, mamma. Tell me about it!" for mamma's stories were the nicest stories in the world.

"But those fairies are truly ones, Dorothy"

"Truly, mamma?"

"Truly, Dorothy. Jump up here and I'll tell you all about it."

So Dorothy jumped up into mamma's lap again, for she had jumped down when she thought the story was ended, and mamma gave her a kiss and a "bear's hug," and began:

"Each little girl has ten real fairies to help her, Dorothy, and she can make them go to work whenever she likes."

"Do you mean, mamma?" very wide indeed, and she said:

"Have I got ten fairies, too, mamma?"

"Oh, yes, Dolly; you have got ten fairies, too, just the same as other little girls. Your ten little fairies are very busy, useful little servants, and they love nothing better than to work for you all day long. The more they work the better work they can do, for they become quicker and more expert. That means, they learn how to work better. Do you understand, Dorothy?"

Dorothy nodded.

"Oh, yes; I know; just like when I pick up all the scraps and papers; I know better how to do it next time."

"Yes, and just so, if you make your little fairy servants work, they will serve you better each time. So you ought to keep them busy all day long. Don't you think so, Dorothy?"

"I just wish I knew where they lived, mamma," said Dolly, wistfully.

"Yes, and just so, if you make house. Dolly girl," replied mamma, smiling at Dolly's puzzled look.

"Dear me!" Dolly exclaimed, with a long breath.

"They are not so very big, Dolly," went on this funny mamma, squeezing Dolly's plump little hands. "Two of them are about two inches long, and the rest not more than three."

"How much is three inches, mamma?"

So mamma got out her pretty tape measure, with the bird on the cover, and measured one of Dolly's hands and showed her just how long three inches were.

"Oh, I do wish I knew where they were, mamma."

"Such dear, busy, faithful little servants they can be, Dolly," mamma went on, her eyes twinkling fast, with the little shiny sparkles in them that Dolly loved.

"Do—do tell, mamma?"

"And your fairies have learned how to do such nice things, Dolly. They can pick up the baby's toys, or bring papa's paper, or carry grandma her knitting"—and mamma laughed ever so hard.

"Oh, I know, mamma; I know! I've found out!" cried Dolly. "I know now who my ten fairies are!"

And since every little girl has ten fairies just like them, who knows what Dorothy's ten little fairy servants were!

Children in Japan.

From one end of Japan to the other a child is treated like a sacred thing. Each little one is put at birth under "the protection of the public." Each little one carries its name and address clearly marked on a ticket worn around the neck. This is useful not only in case the child is lost or wanders away, but in case of the conflagrations which suddenly lay low the modern villages of Japan. In case of the outbreak of a fire it is customary for some one to go from house to house, calling out the little folks, who are then removed in a body to some place of safety, leaving the elders to protect their property untrammeled by the harrowing thought that some child is missing in a corner of the house. The first duty in case of fire is to protect the little folks.

The beautiful behavior of Japanese children is always commented upon by English and American travelers. It is the result of a system of careful education, which clothes boys and girls, rich and poor, with "a garment of perfect courtesy." The lesson is inculcated without robbing infancy of a moment of thoughtless happiness. A great deal can be said in praise of this system of domestic education which gains the desired end without snubbing, weary scolding or punishments.

Saying Good-By.

The Turk will solemnly cross hands upon his breast and make a profound obeisance when he bids you farewell.

The genial Jap will take his slipper off as you depart and say with a smile: "You are going to leave my despicable house in your honorable journeying—I regard thee!"

In the Philippines the parting benediction is bestowed in the form of rubbing one's friends' face with one's hand.

The German "lebe wohl" is not particularly sympathetic in its sound, but it is less embarrassing to those it speaks than the Hindoo's performance, who, when you go from him, falls in the dust at your feet.

The Fiji Islanders cross two red feathers.

Mrs. Potato Bug—What are the weather probabilities for today?
Her Husband—Strong winds and heavy showers of parls green.

The natives of New Guinea exchange chocolate. The Burmese bend low and says "Pibi! Pibi!"

The "Auf wiedersehen" of the Austrians is the most feeling expression of farewell.

The Cuban would consider his good-by anything but a cordial one unless he was given a good cigar. The South Sea islanders ratify each other's white teeth necklace.

The Siam land indicates will, at parting, dig their spears in the earth as a sign of confidence and mutual esteem. This is the origin of the term, "burying the tomahawk."

In the islands in the straits of the Sound the natives at your going will stoop down and clutch your feet.

The Russian form of parting salutation is brief, consisting of the single word, "praschal," said to sound like a sneeze. The Greek islander will wait the end of the departing guest's robe, and then solemnly shake his own hands three times.

"It Wouldn't Hurt."

The child's idea of the camera seemed not to harmonize with that of its mother, for when the photographer began to adjust the lens and direct it toward little Edward, that young person set up a howl.

In vain did his mother do her best to quiet him. Edward did not want his picture taken.

"Hush, my child," she said, soothingly. "the gentleman won't hurt you! Just smile and look at it a moment, and it will be all over before you know it."

"Yes, I know mamma," whimpered Edward, with the tears running down his cheeks, "but that's what you told me at the dentist's."

Persia's Tiny Camels.

The western part of Persia is inhabited by a species of camel which is the pygmy of its kind. They are snow-white and are on that account almost worshiped by the people.

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